

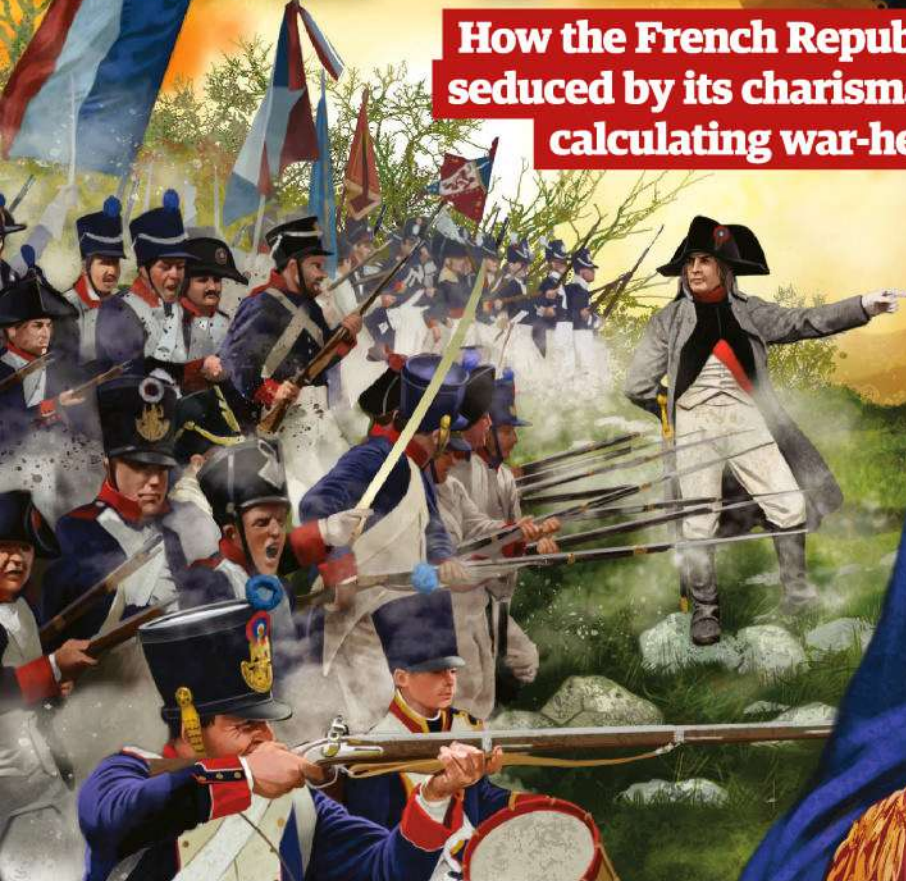
ALL ABOUT HISTORY

ORIGINS OF FAIRY TALES
Real history behind your favourite stories



THE RISE OF NAPOLEON

How the French Republic was seduced by its charismatic and calculating war-hero



DO WE HAVE AGINCOURT WRONG?

New research unearths iconic battle's secrets



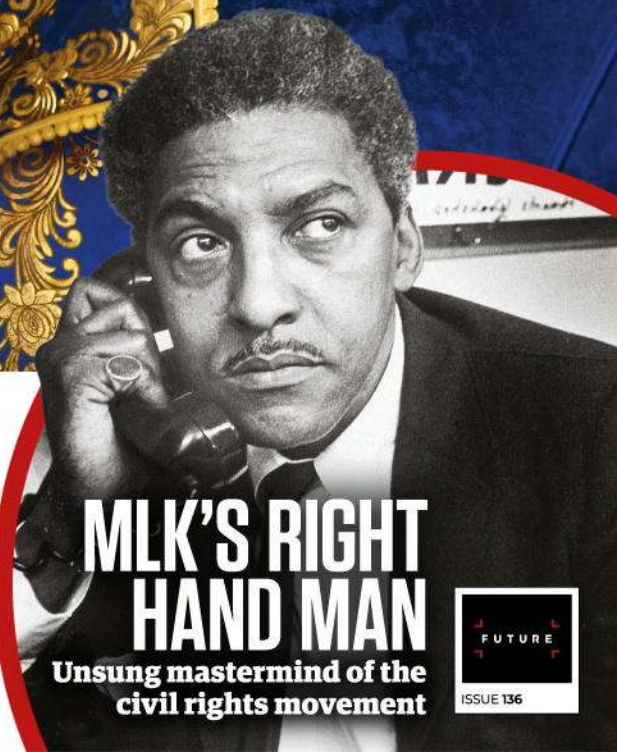
GREAT VICTORIAN CON-MAN SCANDAL

The court case that had the world guessing



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NEWSLETTER



Welcome

I've probably mentioned this in a previous editorial at some point, but in my own personal study of history I tend to avoid delving too deeply into the 'great men' who appear to have controlled events. Firstly, I find the stories of average people on the ground and their roles in larger events to be more interesting, typically. Secondly, I don't entirely subscribe to the idea that even the most powerful people fully control events around them.

There are, however, some rulers about whom I would be hard pressed to argue that point. Napoleon sits among the top of the list of individuals who very much seemed to shape events. But how did this Corsican soldier take an anti-monarchist revolutionary state and redirect it to become an autocratic empire? Was he fully the genius tactician history remembers? Was there more to that story?

These are the key questions we hope to answer with the help of Professor William Doyle who has his own take on how Napoleon proved so successful. We also welcome back Emma Southon to tell us about the life of one of Rome's most important empresses, discuss why we might have Agincourt wrong with Michael Livingston, and delve into the history of your favourite fairy tales. Lots to be digging into, so I'll ask you to tarry no longer. Enjoy the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor



Napoleon took a pilgrimage to the throne of Charlemagne having been crowned emperor in 1804

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ALL ABOUT HISTORY

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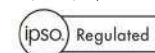
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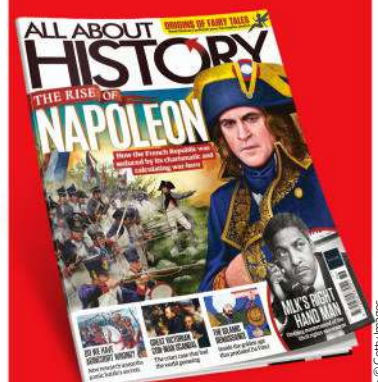
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NAPOLEON

How the French Republic was seduced by its charismatic and calculating war-hero

KAROLVS. MAGNVS.

Defining Moments





4 November 2001

FIRST HARRY POTTER FILM PREMIERES

At the Odeon cinema in Leicester Square, London, *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone* premiered. Featuring young actors Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson alongside a star-studded cast of British acting royalty, the first *Harry Potter* film became a worldwide hit. Seven more films followed, based on the books by JK Rowling, as well as several spin-off films. *Harry Potter's* wizarding world remains one of the most popular and beloved fictional universes, with its media franchise estimated to be worth around \$25 billion.

© Alamy

14 November 1948

CHARLES III IS BORN

Prince Charles was born at Buckingham Palace on 14 November 1948. At the time of his birth, he was second in line to the British throne after his mother, who ascended the throne in 1952 after the death of her father George VI. With his mother reigning for a record-breaking 70 years, Charles became the longest serving heir in British history and the oldest person to become monarch when he came to the throne in 2022 at the age of 73.



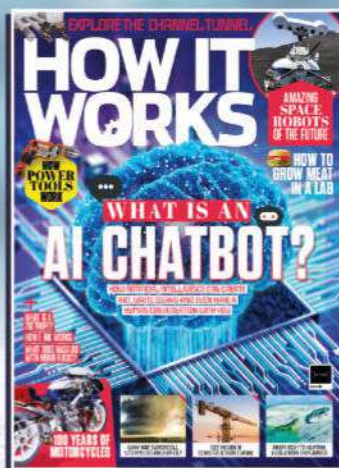
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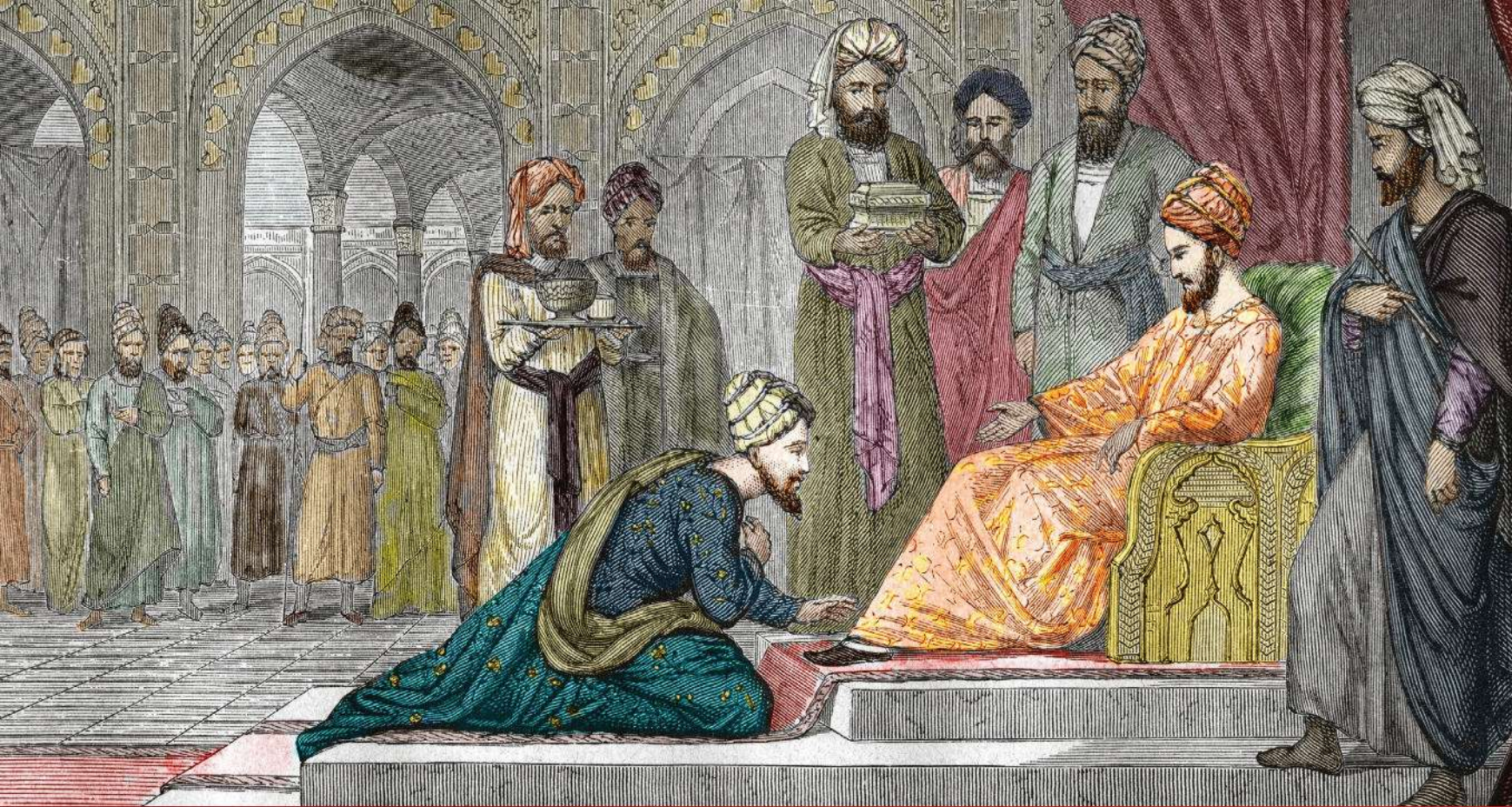
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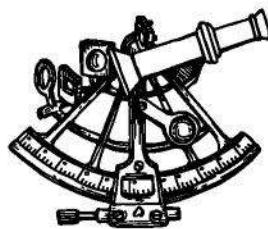
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ALL ABOUT ISLAMIC GOLDEN AGE



How this cultural movement helped to change the world we live in today, from science and art to mathematics and philosophy



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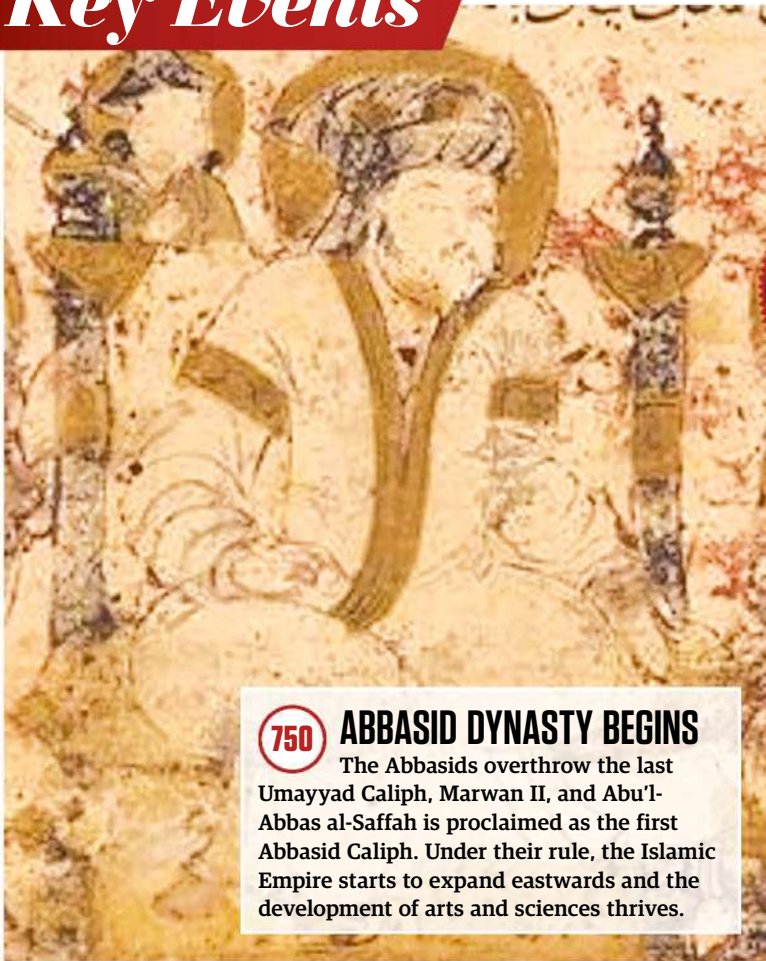
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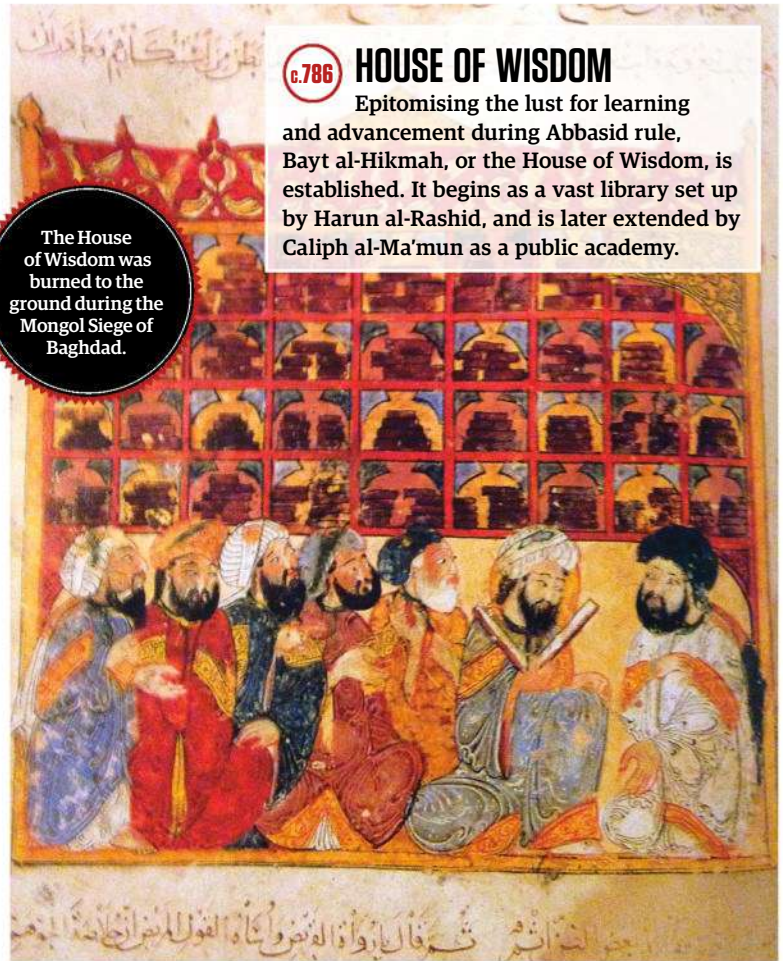


Key Events



750 ABBASID DYNASTY BEGINS

The Abbasids overthrow the last Umayyad Caliph, Marwan II, and Abu'l-Abbas al-Saffah is proclaimed as the first Abbasid Caliph. Under their rule, the Islamic Empire starts to expand eastwards and the development of arts and sciences thrives.



c.786 HOUSE OF WISDOM

Epitomising the lust for learning and advancement during Abbasid rule, Bayt al-Hikmah, or the House of Wisdom, is established. It begins as a vast library set up by Harun al-Rashid, and is later extended by Caliph al-Ma'mun as a public academy.

The House of Wisdom was burned to the ground during the Mongol Siege of Baghdad.

UMAYYAD CALIPHATE BEGINS 661

After the end of the Rashidun Caliphate, Mu'awiyah establishes himself as the first Umayyad Caliph marking the beginning of Umayyad rule in the Islamic Empire.



EXPANSION INTO IBERIAN PENINSULA 711

Umayyad forces begin their conquest into Spain, under the leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad. Muslim rule gradually spreads northwards beginning an Islamic period in Al-Andalus (Spain).



INTRODUCTION OF PAPER 751

The Abbasids win the Battle of Talas against the Chinese Tang Dynasty. As a result, Chinese papermaking techniques make their way to the Islamic Empire.



CONSTRUCTION OF Umayyad MOSQUE COMMENCES 705

Caliph al-Walid I commissions the construction of the Great Mosque in Damascus, Syria, the Umayyad capital. The Mosque is completed and opens in 715.



ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS c.750

A collection of tales are told in the oral tradition that become known as *One Thousand And One Nights* - the most well-known literature from the Islamic Golden Age.

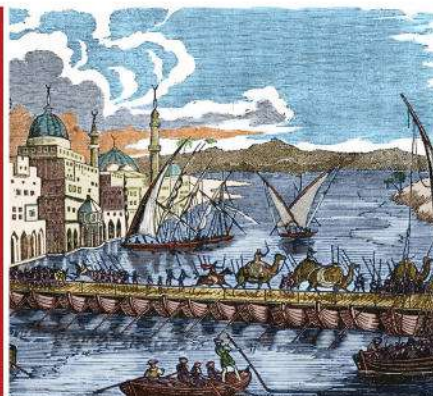


GREAT MOSQUE OF CORDOBA 786

The Great Mosque of Córdoba is commissioned by Abd al-Rahman I. Its construction results in one of the most significant examples of Islamic architecture in Spain.

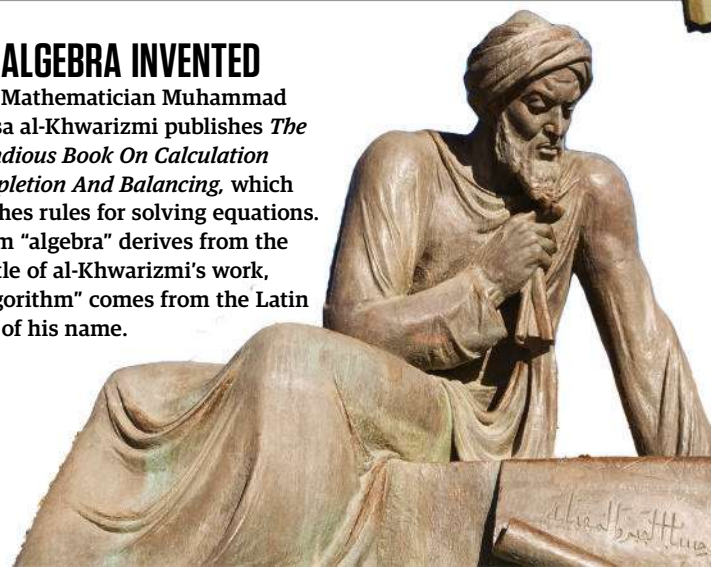
762 CAPITAL AT BAGHDAD

The capital of the empire is moved from Damascus, Syria to Baghdad in modern-day Iraq. Baghdad's central position between Europe and Asia makes it ideal for trading. The city becomes the centre of power and learning, attracting scholars and intellectuals.



c.820 ALGEBRA INVENTED

Mathematician Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi publishes *The Compendious Book On Calculation By Completion And Balancing*, which establishes rules for solving equations. The term "algebra" derives from the Latin title of al-Khwarizmi's work, and "algorithm" comes from the Latin version of his name.



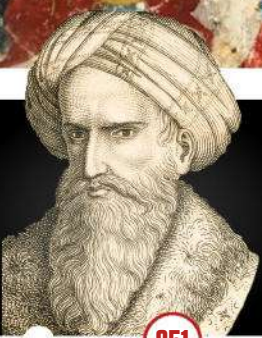
1258 SIEGE OF BAGHDAD

The Mongols besiege the city of Baghdad after Caliph al-Musta'sim refuses to surrender to their forces. Over 13 days, Baghdad is destroyed. The Caliph is killed and Abbasid rule, as well as the Islamic Golden Age, comes to an end.



HARUN AL-RASHID 786

Harun al-Rashid becomes the fifth Caliph of the Abbasid Dynasty. His reign is marked by wealth and the flourishing of art at the Baghdad court.



ANDROMEDA GALAXY DESCRIBED 964

The galaxy Andromeda is described for the first time by astronomer Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi in his *Book Of Fixed Stars*. He calls Andromeda a "small cloud".



IBN RUSHD BORN 1126

Ibn Rushd, whose name is often Latinised to Averroes, is born in Córdoba, Spain. He becomes one of the greatest philosophers of the Islamic Golden Age.



c.786

c.820

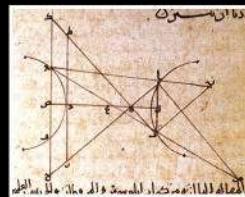
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1025

1258

BOOK OF INGENIOUS DEVICES 850

Three brothers, known as the Banu Musa, publish their *Book Of Ingenious Devices*. The book describes around 100 inventions, some of the brothers' own creation.



BOOK OF OPTICS 1021

Mathematician Ibn Al-Haytham completes his *Book Of Optics*. He is the first person to discover the laws of refraction, and his treatise changes the way vision is understood.

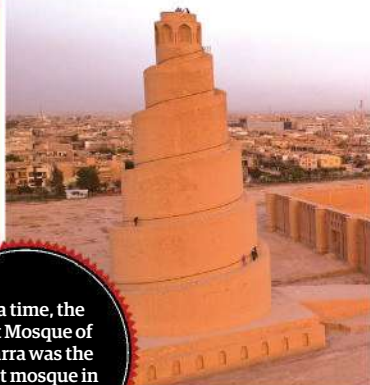


MUSTANSIRIYA MADRASAH 1227

Caliph al-Mustansir establishes the Mustansiriya Madrasah in Baghdad. The university opens in 1233 and teaches students from across the Islamic world a range of subjects.

851 GREAT MOSQUE OF SAMARRA

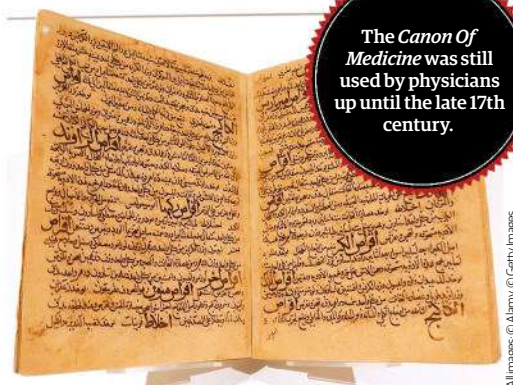
The Great Mosque of Samarra (in Iraq) is built by Caliph al-Mutawakkil. The mosque complex measures 374m by 443m and has walls covered in dark blue glass panels. Its minaret reaches 52m high and is famous for its spiral shape.



For a time, the Great Mosque of Samarra was the largest mosque in the world.

1025 CANON OF MEDICINE

Physician and philosopher Ibn Sina, sometimes known by the Latinised name Avicenna, completes the medical encyclopedia the *Canon Of Medicine*. The canon outlines medical practices and remedies from Persia, India and China and draws upon Aristotle's natural philosophy.



The *Canon Of Medicine* was still used by physicians up until the late 17th century.



Inside History

MUSTANSIRIYA MADRASAH

Baghdad, Iraq
1227 – present

Still standing in Baghdad, Iraq, the Mustansiriya Madrasah is one of the oldest universities in the world. It was established by Caliph Al-Mustansir, of the Abbasid Dynasty, in 1227 and took six years to be completed, opening its doors to students on 6 April 1233. At the time, madrasahs (schools) were used to foster Islamic thought and the Mustansiriya Madrasah was no different. Teaching Islamic doctrines as well as a range of other subjects, the school provided an advanced education for students who travelled to and stayed at the university to study under the guidance of prominent tutors.

The building itself is an astounding model of Islamic architectural design and remains an impressive example of the use of decorative geometric patterns that became popular during this period. The Madrasah operated as a university for nearly a century, surviving the Mongol Conquest of 1258 when it was partially destroyed but later rebuilt. Though studies continued under the Mongols for a period, the university eventually closed its doors, with evidence showing that the building was used for a time as a caravanserai (a type of roadside inn).

The Ottomans took control in Baghdad in 1534, and the school building was then used by craftsmen before becoming a customs office in later centuries. In the 20th century, the significance of the Mustansiriya Madrasah was recognised by the Directorate of Antiquities in Iraq, and the building began to be restored and preserved, with several of the surrounding buildings being demolished in order to restore the Madrasah's original boundaries.

In 1960, the building opened as the home of the Museum of Islamic Art. Since then, maintenance works have continued on the site to help conserve the original building. It is now a part of the modern Mustansiriya University, which was established in 1963.



The beautiful muqarnas at the Sheikh Lotfollah mosque in Iran

MUQARNAS

An exquisite example of Islamic architecture from this period, the university building is decorated with a plethora of muqarnas. Muqarnas are a series of connected vaults that create a honeycomb-like appearance and are commonly used in Islamic design to adorn domes, minarets and arches.

LIBRARY



The library at Mustansiriya Madrasah is said to have been supplied with around 80,000 volumes by Caliph Al-Mustansir when it first opened. Over time, this collection is believed to have grown to number around 400,000 works. The content of the library was merged with that of another madrasah in the 1390s, but was eventually absorbed into the royal library at Istanbul after the Ottoman invasion in the 16th century.

FACILITIES

The school had many facilities providing everything that the students who lived and studied there could need. Incorporated into the university upon its opening were a Turkish bath (or hammam), a pharmacy, a kitchen and a hospital. The hospital allowed students of medicine to learn and practise their skills on site.

WATER CLOCK

When the Mustansiriya Madrasah first opened in 1233, a clock sat where the fountain feature in the courtyard is now placed. The clock was powered by water and was used to tell the time. It was also used to announce the time for the hours of prayer during the day and the night. The highly technical clock demonstrated the technological and scientific advancements of the Arabs.

INTERIOR

Though the exterior of the Mustansiriya Madrasah is highly decorated with geometric patterns, muqarnas and archways, the interior is much simpler in its design. Made mostly of brick, the inside of the building is sparse with windows, skylights and high ceilings providing natural light. There are 40 large halls on the ground floor, with a further 36 halls upstairs.

SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Upon its foundation, the university became the first institution to facilitate the learning of all four of the Islamic doctrines: Maliki, Hanafi, Hanbali and Shafi'i. The school was run by a headmaster and classes were taught by a selection of teachers from Iraq, Egypt and across West Asia. The establishment of the Mustansiriya Madrasah inspired the foundation of other schools that also took a similar approach to teaching.

EDUCATION

As well as teaching the Islamic doctrines, the university also taught a wide variety of subjects and courses that attracted students from across the Islamic world. Pupils at the Mustansiriya Madrasah travelled from Iraq, Egypt, the Levant and Andalusia to study subjects such as medicine, philosophy, literature, mathematics and theology by some of the finest intellectual minds of the time.

MAIN GATE

The main gate is one of the most recognisable and impressive aspects of this historic building. Reaching almost 16 metres high, the gate is inscribed with a ten-line foundation passage describing the building's founder Al-Mustansir. Surrounding the passage are a variety of geometric designs. The door that sits inside the gate is surprisingly small given the grandeur of its framing.

IWAN

The buildings on opposite sides of the Mustansiriya Madrasah's central courtyard consist of a hall area with a high ceiling. Buildings of this kind are often features of Islamic architecture and are called an iwan. Having two iwans facing each other means that they could be used at different times of the year depending on the weather, temperature and position of the Sun.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

The students at the Mustansiriya Madrasah lived and worked on the premises, so some of the original buildings were designated as accommodation. Along with providing food and somewhere to live, the university ensured that each student was given an allowance and clothing. The students lived alongside orphans who were also taught at the school and were given the same provisions.





Anatomy

UMAYYAD CALIPH

Damascus, Syria
661 CE – 750 CE

TIRAZ

The word tiraz refers to embroidered and inscribed armbands that were sometimes worn by Umayyad caliphs and those within their close circle, as well as the factories from this period that made luxurious garments for the caliph. Tiraz armbands were often gifted by the caliph as a reward for loyalty.

COLOUR

Some historians have identified that the Umayyad caliphs were particularly fond of the colour white and are believed to have chosen the colour for the Umayyad banner. It is possible that white was selected because it was favoured by the Prophet Muhammad as a symbol of purity, a tenet of Islam.

MULA'A

A popular outdoor wrap or cloak, called the mula'a or burnus, is recorded as having been worn by some of the Umayyad caliphs. It is believed that caliph Al-Walid II (ruled 743 CE-744 CE) wore a mula'a that he had scented with different kinds of perfumes.

TURBAN

The Umayyad caliphs did not wear crowns, but instead wore headwear more akin to a turban. It is recorded that two types of turban were popular with the caliphs: the 'imāma (shown here) and the qalansuwa, which had pieces of fabric emanating from the back.

JUBBA

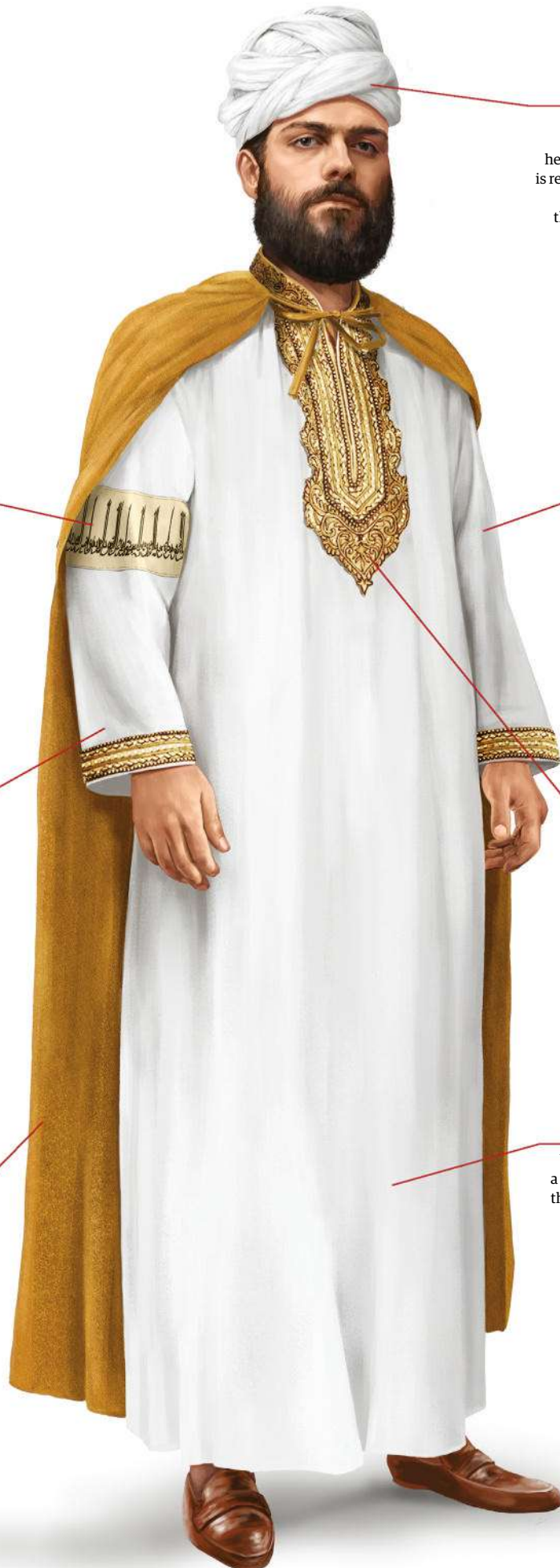
A staple of Islamic clothing for centuries, the jubba was worn by the caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty as the main outer tunic. While jubbas could be made from simple fabrics, the Umayyad caliphs wore jubbas made from luxurious materials like silk. The caliph's jubba was also sometimes embroidered.

WASHI

In the latter part of the Umayyad Caliphate, caliphs took to wearing clothing decorated with embroidery. This kind of embroidery, called washi, may have come from Iraq, Egypt or Yemen, where it was already popular. The wearing of washi is indicative of the Umayyads' penchant for adopting new styles while still observing their Arabic heritage.

ROBES OF HONOUR

With the Umayyad caliphs having adopted a more decadent style of dress, they ensured their officials were also dressed in luxurious clothing. The caliphs gifted clothes made in tiraz factories, which were called "robes of honour", to his loyal advisors in special ceremonies called the khil'a.



Historical Treasures

BRONZE INCENSE BURNER

This magnificent lion-shaped incense burner would not have been out of place in a palace
Taybad, Iran, 1181 CE

The Islamic Golden Age is known for its advancements in many fields, including science, mathematics, philosophy and of course, the arts. Crafts known to have flourished during this period include ceramics, woodwork and manuscript illumination. The Seljuk period in particular was renowned for its high-quality craftsmanship and this era was described by Richard Ettinghausen in a 1970 paper as "the richest" of all the periods in Iranian art.

Metalwork in particular saw many advancements throughout the golden age and numerous exquisite examples of the craft can be found in museums all over the world. Shown here is an incense burner made for Amir Saif al-Dunya wa'l-Din ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, currently among the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The burner is the work of the artist Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali and as with many examples from this period, the item is crafted from bronze. According to the Metropolitan Museum, the decision to immortalise the artist's name demonstrates the importance of the role of the artist during the Seljuk period. Fortunately, the engraving also includes the date of creation, allowing historians to accurately date the artefact and compare it to others of the same period.

The burner is in the shape of a lion, one of a number found. During the Seljuk period, incense burners in the shape of animals were very popular. However, the animals most predominantly featured were cats or birds. Birds may have been associated with bringing good luck. Lions on the other hand were more common in royal settings due to their symbolising such virtues as power, courage and strength.

According to the Metropolitan Museum, incense was widely used throughout the Islamic world, but its price was high and so it most likely would have been considered a luxury good reserved for wealthy families. The incense burner here would likely have been kept in its owner's palace. Guests to the magnificent home would have been welcomed by beautiful smells emanating from this and probably other incense burners, all equal in their craftsmanship.

HOW WAS IT MADE?

Each item on the lion would have been cast separately and then would have been soldered together. According to the Metropolitan Museum, it is one example of a small collection of lion-shaped artefacts.

REMOVABLE HEAD

The head of the lion is where the coal and incense are placed and as such it is removable. On the neck and body can be found a number of holes (what the Met Museum describes as 'piercings') that allow the scented smoke to pour forth and into the room.

ENGRAVINGS

The body of the lion is covered with engravings that tell us the name of the owner; Amir Saif al-Dunya wa'l-Din ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi. On the feet can be found the words 'happiness', 'prosperity' and 'well-being'.

STANDING TALL

According to the Metropolitan Museum, this example of an incense burner is particularly noteworthy for a number of reasons, one of which is its vast size. The lion is roughly 85cm tall, 83cm long and 23cm in width.





Hall of Fame

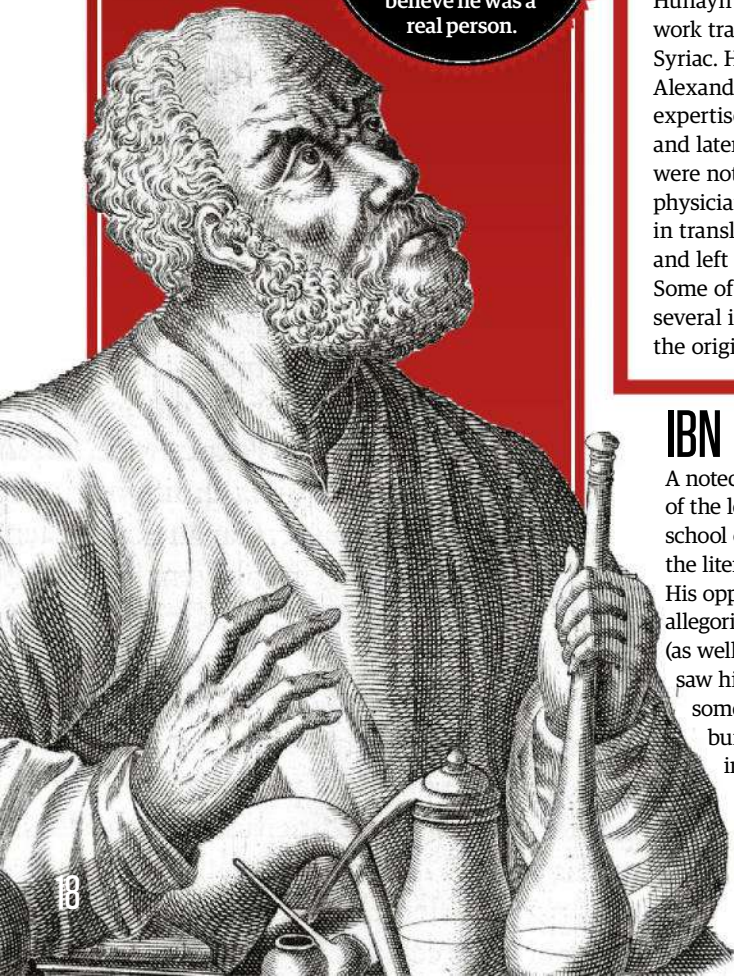
THINKERS AND PIONEERS

The Islamic Golden Age was a period of advancements in many fields, here are ten individuals who broke new academic ground

Jabir ibn Hayyan c. 721 – 816

Also known as Geber, Jabir ibn Hayyan is considered the father of Islamic chemistry and was a noted alchemist. According to the Library of Congress he was known for his ability to translate complex ideas into simple language so that they could be enjoyed by the public at large and not just the scholarly elite. There is debate as to whether the large number of works attributed to him were actually written by the author or were in fact composed by a number of others.

Some scholars debate whether Hayyan existed at all or was simply a pseudonym used by multiple authors, though most believe he was a real person.



Hunayn ibn Ishaq 808 – 873

Hunayn ibn Ishaq is perhaps best remembered for his work translating classical Greek texts into Arabic and Syriac. He is suspected to have spent some time in Alexandria, where he most likely acquired his linguistic expertise. Although born in al-Hira, Hunayn studied and later worked in Baghdad. However, Hunayn's skills were not limited to translation and he was also a noted physician and scientist. Indeed, he only began working in translation after he quarrelled with his medical tutor and left his studies – although the pair later reconciled. Some of Hunayn's translations mean that the text of several important Greek manuscripts survive, despite the originals having been lost to time.

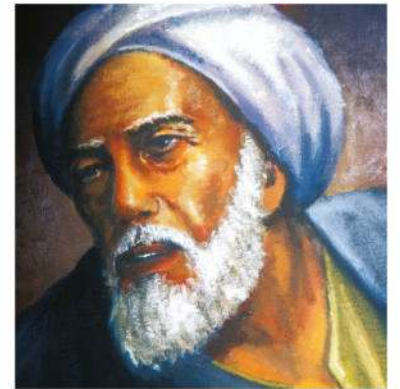
IBN HAZM 994 – 1064

A noted scholar, Hazm was one of the leading forces in the Zahiri school of thought, which proposes the literal interpretation of the *Quran*. His opposition to the then leading allegorical interpretation of sacred texts (as well as certain political opinions) saw him reviled in his own time, with some of his books being publicly burnt. Hazm was said to have been incredibly productive, creating some 400 literary works, though only 40 remain in existence.



ABBAS IBN FIRNAS 810 – 887

As with the other great minds of his time, Abbas ibn Firnas was a man of many talents. An astronomer and poet among a variety of other occupations, Ibn Firnas was obsessed with devising a means to fly. Finally he constructed himself a set of wings, in reality probably a primitive form of glider. While he did indeed glide through the air, he crashed and sustained several injuries, which likely contributed to his death ten years later.



MUHAMMAD AL-IDRISI 1100 – 1165

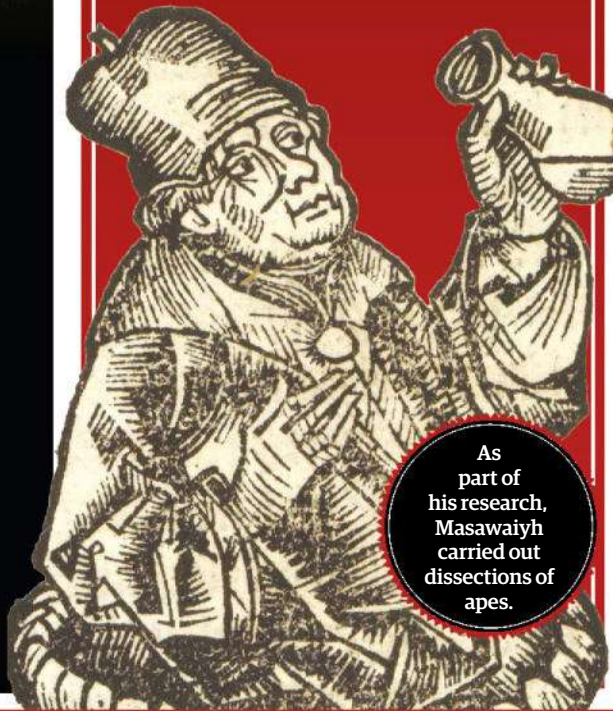
Al-Idrisi was a noted traveller and geographer who spent a great deal of time exploring Africa and the Mediterranean, using his experiences to compose his maps. For a number of years he worked in Sicily for King Roger II. His most famous creation was the *Nuzhat al-Mushtaq*, which comprised of a map on a six-foot silver disc as well as 70 additional maps and text. It was an astounding achievement, one that took 15 years to complete and according to the Library of Congress was "the most important geographical work completed in 12th-century Europe."





Masawaiyh 777 – 857 CE

Masawaiyh was a noted physician who worked for four caliphs. He composed a number of celebrated treatises on a variety of medical ailments and conditions including leprosy and a number of fevers. One of these, *Disorder of the Eye*, is regarded as the earliest systematic text on the study of ophthalmology. Masawaiyh is also said to have hosted regular public seminars, where patients and pupils flocked from far and wide to listen to him discuss his research. Like many of his peers, he also worked in translation, on many classical Greek medical works.



As part of his research, Masawaiyh carried out dissections of apes.

AL-ZAHRAWI

c. 936 – 1013

Considered the father of operative surgery, al-Zahrawi was a noted physician. He wrote a 30-volume encyclopedia of the knowledge he had acquired during his many years. Among his achievements was the creation of some 200 surgical instruments, a number of which formed the basis for instruments that are still used today. Al-Zahrawi's books made their way to medieval Europe where they were the subject of intense study by scholars of the time.



AL-KHWARIZMI

c. 780 – 850

Al-Khwarizmi is known as 'the father of algebra' thanks to his book *The Compendious Book On Calculation By Completion And Balancing*. So important was this work that it is credited by *New Scientist* with laying the foundations for modern equation solving and algebra. For a time Al-Khwarizmi served as the director of The House of Wisdom, the centre of Islamic studies into the study of philosophy, mathematics, the sciences and a variety of other subjects. Al-Khwarizmi was also responsible for the first quadrant that allowed the time to be determined by the study of the sun or the stars, according to *New Scientist*. He also furthered research into algorithms and was a noted geographer.

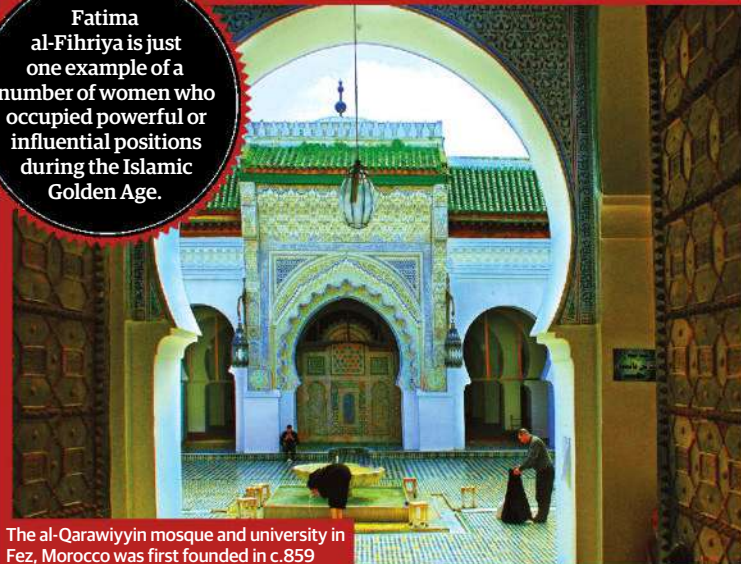
al-Kindi c. 801 – 873

Like Hunayn ibn Ishaq, al-Kindi worked as a translator primarily of classical Greek works. However, he was also a writer in his own right and a number of his books were extremely influential. In particular, his philosophical treatise *On First Philosophy* led him to become known as the 'philosopher of the Arabs' or the 'Arab Philosopher'. As well as a philosopher he was also a noted scientist and mathematician. He is considered the founder of the Peripatetic school of Islamic Philosophy that declined significantly towards the end of the Golden Age.

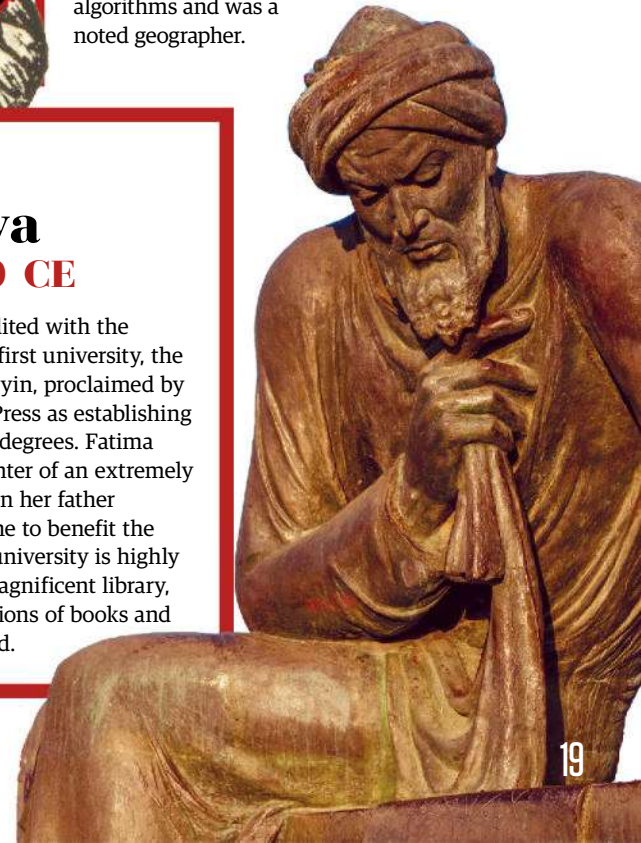
Fatima al-Fihriya is just one example of a number of women who occupied powerful or influential positions during the Islamic Golden Age.

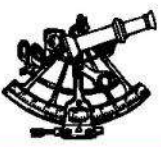
Fatima al-Fihriya c. 800 – 880 CE

Fatima al-Fihriya is credited with the founding of the world's first university, the University of al-Qarawiyyin, proclaimed by Manchester University Press as establishing the system of awarding degrees. Fatima al-Fihriya was the daughter of an extremely wealthy family and when her father died she used her fortune to benefit the education system. The university is highly regarded today for its magnificent library, one of the oldest collections of books and manuscripts in the world.



The al-Qarawiyyin mosque and university in Fez, Morocco was first founded in c.859





THE LASTING LEGACY OF THE GOLDEN AGE

Rachel Parikh explains how this period of cultural, artistic and scientific advancements has impacted modern life

What were some of the foundational underpinnings of what we've come to call the Islamic Golden Age?

There are several factors and circumstances that led to the Golden Age. First, and perhaps most significantly, is the very nature of the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258). It was a vast empire; at its greatest extent, it stretched from modern-day Tunisia to modern-day Pakistan. The empire also experienced virtually no external attacks and no internal political turmoil. Their power and stability can be accredited to unifying people under a single faith, that of Islam; the use and standardisation of Arabic; and the creation of an inclusive society, with policies that supported both Muslims and non-Muslims, such as Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

Another factor was the establishment of the Abbasid's capital of Baghdad. The second ruler of the Caliphate, Al-Mansur (r. 754-775), chose the location for its strategic position on the Tigris River and along the Silk Roads. Baghdad thus quickly became a major centre within this vast network of trade, commerce, and cultural exchange, and attracted merchants from all over, such as China, India, Ethiopia, and the Frankish lands.

Finally, the Abbasid Caliphate's support of education and learning was a notable contributor. The Caliphate was essentially governed by the Prophet Muhammad's famous assertion, "The ink of scholars is more precious than the blood of martyrs". Public education, as well as *madrasas* - institutions of secular and religious learning - spread rapidly across the kingdom. Public hospitals

Rachel Parikh is a curator, author, and historian of South Asian and Islamic Art, specialising in works on paper and arms and armour. She received her PhD from the University of Cambridge and has held curatorial positions at the Art Institute of Chicago; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Harvard Art Museums at Harvard University; and the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts. Her book, *The Khalili Falnama* (London: The Nour Foundation) was published in 2022. Parikh also runs an Instagram account dedicated to South Asian and Islamic arms and armour (@rachel.parikh).

provided doctors with opportunities to teach, research, and observe. The government also supported scholars and translators, with the most notable earning salaries equivalent to what professional athletes make today.

But perhaps the most significant example of the Caliphate's patronisation of learning and education is the House of Wisdom. This became a central institution of knowledge, where research was conducted; where foreign works were translated into Arabic from, where scholars stayed or visited, where debates occurred and where new works across disciplines, from physics to veterinary medicine, were written.

What would you say were some of the biggest leaps forward in terms of knowledge that came from this era?

This is a tough question, as there were so many accomplishments born out of this period that had, and continue to have, an impact today. The period was known for a number of important translations. Volumes on the Classics, medicine, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, and other scientific disciplines were meticulously copied from Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Persian, and Chinese, just to name a few, into Arabic. In doing so, these works, concepts, and innovations, which would have otherwise been lost, were preserved.

Additionally, they were exposed to systems of education and knowledge beyond their origin that we rely upon today; for example, the use of 'Arabic' numerals and the concept of zero, both of which actually came from India.

Perhaps the single most important achievement in this field is that Islamic scientists viewed medicine as a science based on observation and experimentation, versus conjecture. In doing so, they created the rudimentary foundations of what we know today as the 'scientific method'. Some



other advances include the Persian physician Abu Bakr al-Razi's (865-925) introduction of the use of antiseptics in cleaning wounds and the connection between bacteria and infection; the Arab physician Al-Zahrawi (936-1013), performing the first thyroidectomy and describes performing what is believed to be the first mastectomy to treat breast cancer, which earn him the nickname, 'the father of operative surgery'; and the Arab physician Ibn al-Nafis' (d. 1288) discovering and accurately describing the human circulatory system.

There were also advances in mathematics, in optics and even in veterinary science. Islamic veterinary science led the field for centuries, particularly regarding the care and treatment of horses.

What are some of the artistic advances?

Art and artistic practices were also greatly impacted during the Golden Age. In Samarra, which was founded as an administrative capital and military base by Caliph Al-Mu'tasim (r. 833-842), artists began decorating architectural features, such as doors, with repetitive abstract, geometric, and/or pseudo-vegetal forms

that later became known to the West as 'arabesque'. These artistic forms would go on to influence not only art and architecture across the Islamic world, but also in Europe.

While paper was invented in China and reserved for the elites, Islamic papermakers learned how to mass-produce it. This was an incredibly important step forward, even considered a factor that contributed to the Golden Age's inception. As a result, the establishment of paper mills spread across the Caliphate and allowed for books to be more accessible and produced in greater quantities. It was through these production methods and skills that the Europeans eventually learned from.

How did the culture and knowledge of this period begin to spread?

There were a few ways. Baghdad's strategic position on the Silk Roads allowed for the transmission of knowledge and cultural exchange. Additionally, with the expansion of the Abbasid Caliphate, its beliefs, practices, and policies were able to disseminate across their new territories. The other method is through the House of



ABOVE
The Residence of the Caliphs in Samarra, where the design innovations became known in the West as 'arabesque'

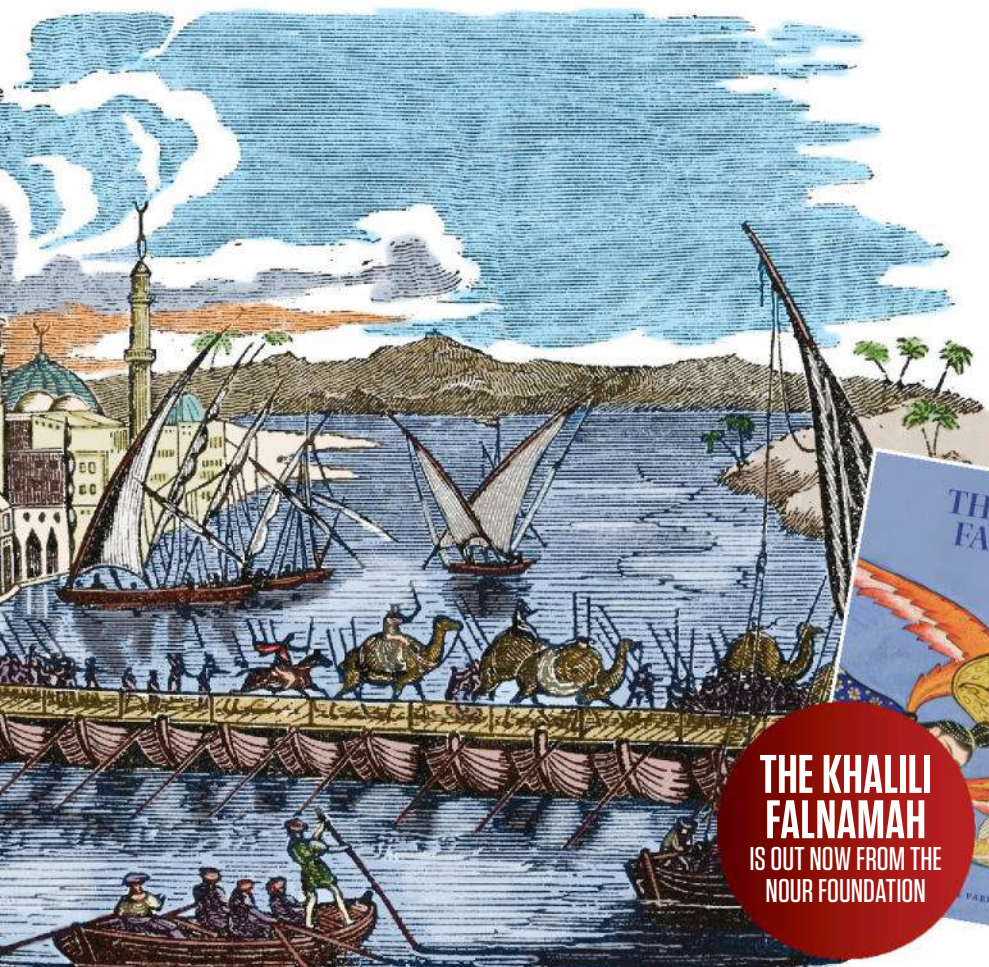
LEFT
Abbasid's capital Baghdad, with its strategic position along the Silk Roads, became a central trading hub visited by merchants from across the world

Wisdom, which as well as attracting and encouraging scholars to stay and visit from beyond the Caliphate, also sent scholars to foreign lands to engage with other scholars and to acquire texts.

How connected was the Islamic Golden Age to the Renaissance that followed it in Europe?

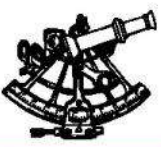
Although they are a few centuries apart, the Islamic Golden Age and the European Renaissance are greatly connected. For instance, Greek and Roman classical texts, as well as scientific and philosophical treatises were re-introduced to Europe through the Arabic translations mentioned above. The writings of Aristotle were revived in Western Europe through the Arabic translations of the Andalusian polymath, Ibn Rushd (1126-1198), who is better known in the West as Averroes.

Advancements that were made during the Golden Age to various disciplines, particularly medicine, mathematics, and sciences inspired Renaissance figures to continue to further these fields. Galileo's famed telescope, for example, could not have existed without the groundbreaking work in optics and lens crafting of Golden Age scientists and polymaths, like Ibn Al-Haytham. The Golden Age's technology of mass-producing paper directly impacted European paper production, which enabled the mass circulation of texts.



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Places to Explore

ARCHITECTURE OF THE GOLDEN AGE

From graceful minarets to gleaming astrolabes, medieval Islam offers a host of treasures

1 AL-AZHAR MOSQUE CAIRO, EGYPT

With its sweeping white courtyard and towering minarets, the Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo is truly a sight to behold. The mosque was founded in 970 in the wake of the Fatimid conquest of Egypt by a general named Jawhar al-Siqilli. It was intended to be the Friday mosque for the city of Cairo, which was chosen as the new capital for the Fatimid Caliphate. It also became a key centre of Islamic learning, with the first seminar taking place here in 976 and the mosque still being attached to the university today. Since its early days, the mosque has undergone many expansions. As you walk into the white courtyard, which forms the original core of Al-Azhar, you'll find yourself surrounded by arcades of keel-shaped arches that date from the time of the Fatimid caliph Al-Hafiz li-Din Allah in the 12th century. While above you, you'll see three minarets which were originally built in 1339, 1495, and 1509 and contribute to Cairo's nickname of 'the city of a thousand minarets'.

Open every day, although times seem to vary. Free entry.



2 MOSQUE-CATHEDRAL OF CORDOBA CÓRDOBA, SPAIN

Currently in use as a Catholic cathedral, but still popularly known as the 'Mezquita' (meaning 'mosque'), the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba is a unique building that embodies the shifts of power endemic to medieval Spain. Soon after the Umayyad conquest of Spain, Abd al-Rahman I, the first emir of the new state of Al-Andalus, decided to build a mosque here in 786-788. The building underwent several later expansions, with eight new naves added to the prayer hall from 833-848 and a towering minaret added in 952, which served as an example for later minarets across the Islamic world. The Mezquita's life as a mosque came to an end with the Christian conquest of Córdoba in 1236, when it was converted into a cathedral. The minaret became a bell tower and eventually a cathedral nave and transept were inserted into the centre of the complex in the 16th century. Nowadays, visitors can explore many different stages of the Mezquita's evolution, including Islamic architectural innovations such as the double-tiered arches in the original prayer hall and the richly decorated Mihrab.

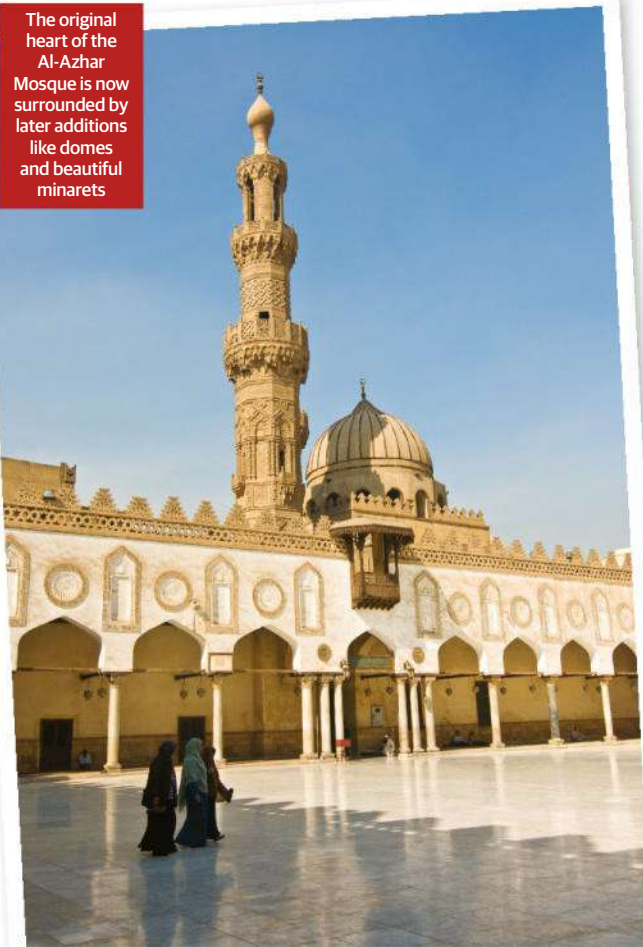
Open Mon-Sat 8.30am-6pm, Sun 8:30am-11:30am and 3pm-6pm. Entry €13.

Several doors to the cathedral still retain their intricate Islamic decoration



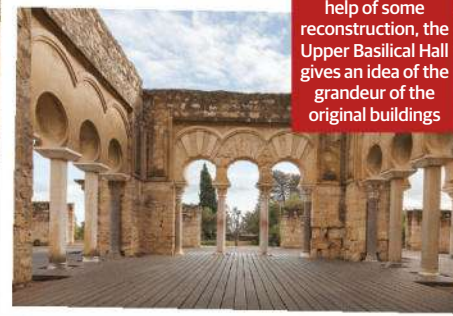
The double-tiered arches in the Mezquita's original prayer hall became a characteristic feature of western Islamic architecture

The original heart of the Al-Azhar Mosque is now surrounded by later additions like domes and beautiful minarets





Now nestled in the Cordoban countryside, 'the shining city' once stretched across 112 hectares



With the help of some reconstruction, the Upper Basilical Hall gives an idea of the grandeur of the original buildings

3 MADINAT AL-ZAHRA OUTSKIRTS OF CÓRDOBA, SPAIN

Around 8km west of central Córdoba lies the ruins of a once magnificent palace-city called the Madinat al-Zahra. Construction began in around 940 on the orders of Abd al-Rahman III, the first caliph of the newly founded Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba, which stretched across the whole of southern Spain and Portugal. Known as 'the shining city', the Madinat al-Zahra was intended to be the political and administrative centre of the caliphate, and it forms the ultimate display of wealth and power. Unfortunately, this vision was to be short-lived since the palace-city was sacked and left in ruins during a civil war around 75

years after it was built. Though it originally spanned a colossal 112 hectares, archaeologists have only uncovered around a tenth of the site so far, but you can still get a breathtaking view of the scale of the Madinat al-Zahra. Wander around the ruins and immerse yourself in the grandeur of the Cordoban Caliphate, including the Upper Basilical Hall, the Hall of Abd al-Rahman III, and the grand Portico that marks the ceremonial entrance to the Alcázar.

Open Tues-Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 9am-3pm. Free for EU citizens, €1.50 for non-EU citizens.



The inner dome pays tribute to scientific developments in astronomy



One of many astrolabes on display in the Gallery of Science and Technology

4 SHARJAH MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization is a perfect way to contextualise your knowledge of the Islamic Golden Age and how it fits in with wider Islamic history. It's situated on the Al-Majarraah waterfront in the city of Sharjah, just a stone's throw north of Dubai, and it contains over 5,000 historical artefacts from the Islamic world, as well as four galleries of Islamic art. Visitors can learn more about the religion itself in the Abu Bakr Gallery of Islamic Faith, before moving on to discover some of the incredible achievements of Islamic scientists in the Ibn al-Haytham Gallery of Science and Technology. The modern world owes much to these early pioneers, particularly in the fields of astronomy,

mathematics, and medicine. You'll discover how the scholar Al-Zahrawi introduced surgical instruments such as scalpels, forceps, and specula, along with the use of catgut for internal stitches. You can also view a fascinating collection of astrolabes that are based on historical models developed by medieval Islamic astronomers.

Open Saturday-Thursday 8am-8pm, Friday 4pm-8pm. Entry 10AED.

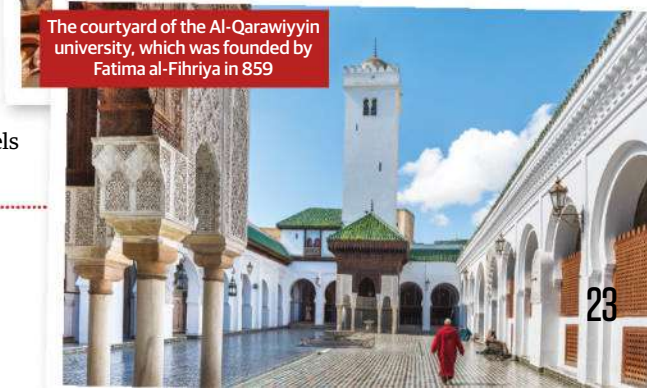
5 MEDINA OF FEZ FEZ, MOROCCO

Wandering around the Medina (old city) of Fez feels like stepping right back into the medieval world. Also known as Fes el-Bali, this is one of the largest car-free urban areas in the world, and many traditional crafts and trades still go on here, making it a particularly immersive way to experience history. Be sure to take a map with you though because it's easy to get lost in these narrow, labyrinthine streets. Fes el-Bali was founded as the capital of the Idrisid dynasty between 789 and 808 and reached its present size under the Almohads in the 12th and 13th centuries. Within the city walls, you can experience some of the trades that made this such a successful merchant city. Pay a visit to the Chouara Tannery, where leather is still treated and dyed in the medieval way using round stone vats. Elsewhere, in the Place Seffarine, you can visit traditional coppersmiths' workshops and witness their incredible skill first-hand. The city is not short on impressive buildings either. The University of al-Qarawiyyin is said to be the oldest continuously operating university in the world, having been founded by a wealthy merchant's daughter named Fatima al-Fihriya in 859. Fes el-Bali is also littered with stunningly decorated madrasas (colleges) dating from the 13th to 17th centuries, showing Fez's continued importance as a centre of learning in the Islamic world.

Open 24hrs. Free entry.



The Chouara Tannery is the largest tannery in Fez and continues to use medieval tanning methods



The courtyard of the Al-Qarawiyyin university, which was founded by Fatima al-Fihriya in 859

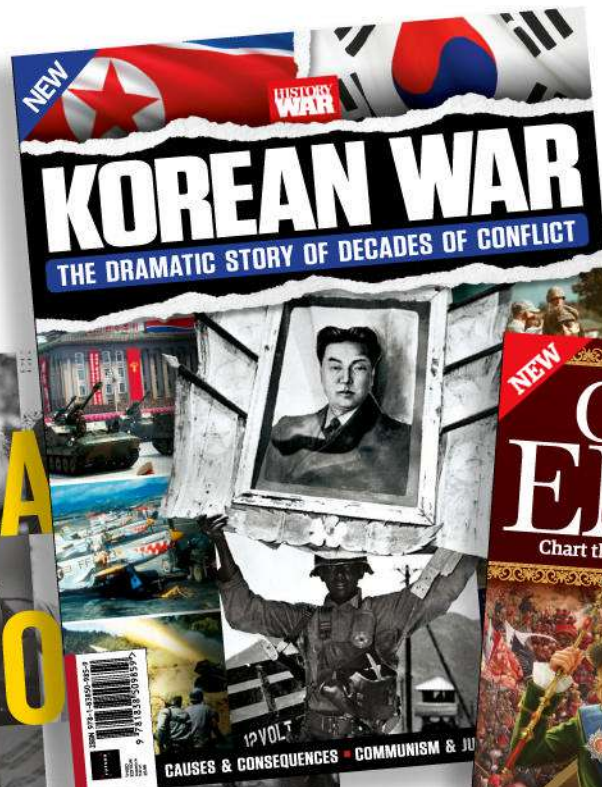
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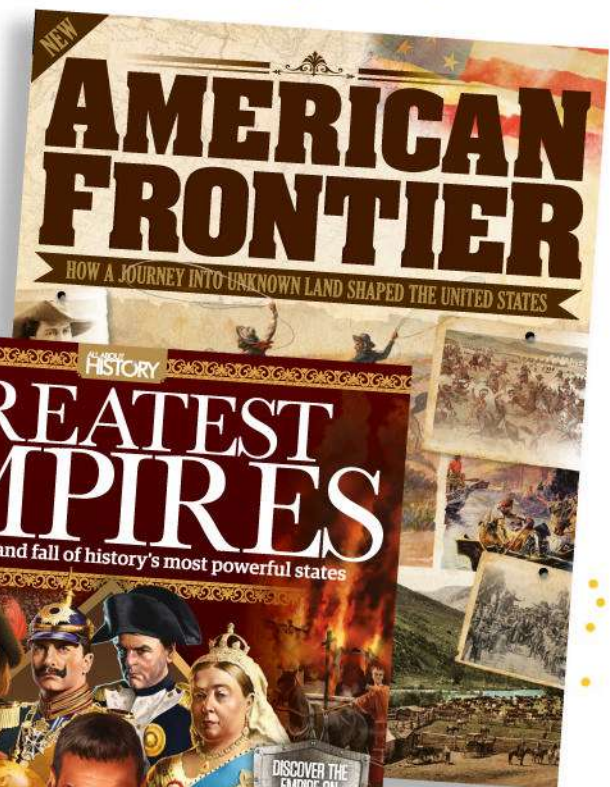
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THE RISE OF

NAPOLÉON

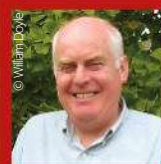
**How the French Republic was
seduced by its charismatic and
calculating war-hero**

Written by William Doyle





EXPERT BIO



© William Doyle

PROFESSOR WILLIAM DOYLE

Professor William Doyle is senior research fellow in Historical Studies and emeritus professor of History at the University of Bristol. He specialises in 18th-century France with several books exploring the causes, events and consequences of the French Revolution.

Illustration by Joe Cummings

“Is he lucky?” Napoleon would often ask when appointing a new general. He knew from his own life and career what that

meant. He believed there was a lucky star guiding his destiny, and it shone on him from the moment of his birth. If he had been born two years earlier, he would have been Genoese, not French, since his native Corsica was only ceded to France in 1768. And he was lucky to be born a nobleman, because this status qualified him for admission into officer training schools in mainland France.

Yet he knew that however well he did, he could never hope to rise high in the royal army, since the most prestigious ranks were reserved for courtiers. In any case, mocked for his remote origins and Italian name and accent, he was not a happy cadet. He had plenty of ambition, but his youthful dream was to return to Corsica and lead a movement to liberate the island from French rule. He spent much of his first years as a commissioned officer back home on leave, seeking glorious native opportunities. But it was the French Revolution that provided them, on a much grander scale.

REVOLUTIONARY OPPORTUNITIES

Though not a political activist in 1789, Napoleon was sympathetic to the reformist aims of the Revolution, and at first he welcomed the return from exile of the former leader of Corsican resistance to French annexation, Pasquale Paoli. But Paoli was soon at loggerheads with the revolutionary regime that had initially allowed him back, and he was suspicious of the extensive and influential Bonaparte family. Months of increasingly bitter rivalry culminated in June 1793 in the whole clan being hounded out of the island. They took refuge in France, and from now on Napoleon abandoned his Corsican ambitions and committed himself wholeheartedly to the service of the revolutionary republic.

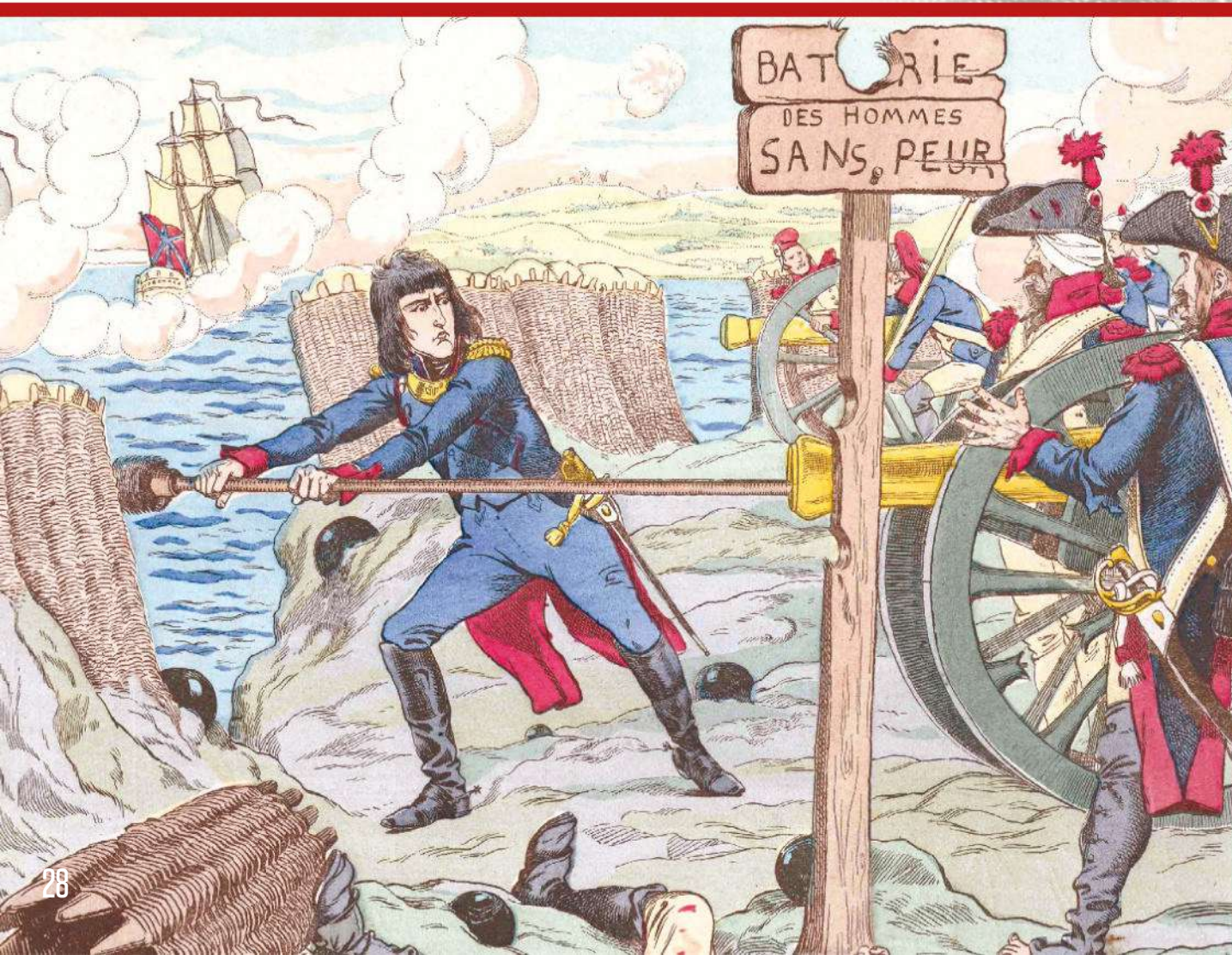
Luck once more favoured him. He was still a commissioned officer, but the officer corps as a whole had been decimated by the emigration of thousands of noblemen when the revolutionaries quarrelled with the king, and then overthrew the monarchy. There were thus unexpected opportunities for officers who remained with the colours, especially since the new republic was soon at war with much of



ABOVE Pasquale Paoli, a Corsican compatriot of Bonaparte and leader of its resistance movement

TOP-RIGHT From 1779 to 1784, Bonaparte was enrolled in the Military School in Brienne, Champagne

ABOVE-RIGHT The Storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 was a key moment for the Revolution



LEFT Napoleon was in charge of the artillery at the Siege of Toulon in 1793



“THOUGH NOT A POLITICAL ACTIVIST IN 1789, HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THE REFORMIST AIMS OF THE REVOLUTION”

Europe. As yet Napoleon had almost no combat experience, and had been horrified by his first sight of dead bodies as he watched from the sidelines when the royal palace was stormed on 10 August 1792. But, trained in artillery, he proved a useful recruit at the Siege of Toulon, the naval port occupied since August 1793 by counter-revolutionaries and the British. There he received his first combat wound, but devised a plan of bombardment that would drive the enemy out of the port. Its success brought him the sort of meteoric promotion that only occurs in wartime, from captain to one-star general.

Yet he still needed the help of his lucky star to progress further. He was a protégé at Toulon of Augustin Robespierre (brother of revolutionary leader Maximilien), but Napoleon's reputation was compromised when the Robespierres fell from favour in July 1794, and he was briefly imprisoned. He was soon released, but given his limited experience and associations the

only fresh posting to come his way was internal police duty. He turned it down, and was cashiered for his refusal.

Within days, however, he was spotted by another contact he had made at Toulon, the deputy Paul Barras, now in charge of ensuring a transfer of power from the Convention that had governed the Republic for its first three years to a new constitution. Royalists in Paris, thwarted in their hopes of a monarchical restoration, planned to rise in protest, and Barras needed a soldier to command a force to confront the insurrection.

He turned to the unemployed Napoleon, who dispersed the rebels with what Thomas Carlyle memorably described as a “whiff of grapeshot”. Napoleon himself ascribed his victory in the revolutionary month of Vendémiaire (October 1795) to “a few shells”. But hundreds were killed. The Italian-sounding name of Bonaparte might still be unfamiliar, but everybody now knew about ‘General Vendémiaire’.

THE INVASION THAT WASN'T

Napoleon's dream of conquering Britain was never to be fulfilled



Perhaps the greatest of Napoleon's unfulfilled wishes was his desire to invade Britain, which he saw as France's most dangerous and challenging foe. Only by quelling the threat from Great Britain, he thought, could France be assured of victory in Europe. And only by quelling the British Royal Navy could Britain be cowed.

Yet this time, Napoleon was forced to accept that his ambitions outstripped his capabilities and after meeting with Foreign Minister Talleyrand, the plans for the invasion of Britain were looking shaky. They looked shakier still when 1,100 French soldiers landed at Killala Bay in Ireland on 22 August 1798, hoping to find support. Instead they found a country that was at its lowest ebb and a populace unwilling to commit to assisting in the planned invasion of Great Britain. A month later the French surrendered, having held Killala alongside the embattled rebels for just 32 days. They were no match for the British troops sent to deal with them.

It had been a weak effort from the start and as Admiral Nelson outwitted the French navy in Egypt, one that was ultimately doomed to fail. Napoleon's planned invasion of Great Britain, the jewel in his plans of conquest, never came to fruition.

MILITARY BREAKTHROUGH

The luck of knowing Barras continued as the former deputy was now at the head of the new regime as one of five constitutional Directors. He introduced the hero of the hour to a former mistress, the widow Beauharnais, soon to be known as Josephine. Napoleon was smitten, and within a few months had badgered her into marriage. He was also now lobbying for command in the field, and with Barras's support he was put in charge of the secondary front in Italy from 2 March 1796.

It was here that Napoleon established his reputation as a general. Within weeks of his arrival his army had knocked the King of Sardinia out of the war and driven the Austrians back into Lombardy. Military historians have debated how far Napoleon ►

owed his Italian victories to talented subordinates, Austrian incompetence, or again, luck. But he also now emerged as a master of propaganda, and ensured that as commander in chief he got all the credit. Intoxicated by success, Napoleon began to set his sights even higher, as a man of destiny. "You've seen nothing yet," he told a visitor, "...I have tasted command, and I can't give it up." By the spring of 1797 he had defeated five armies and sent vast amounts of valuable loot back to France. He had also ignored repeated orders from Paris, dismembering immemorial states

RIGHT Bonaparte married Josephine in 1796

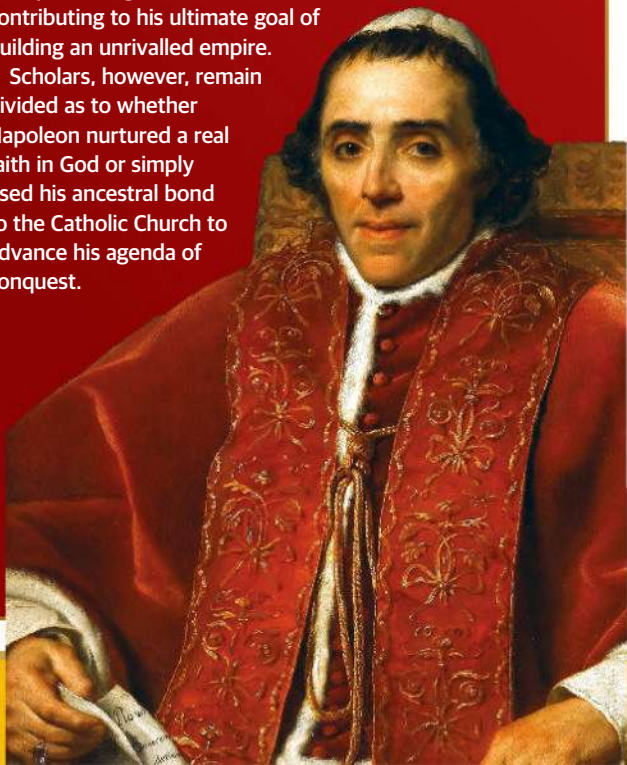
NAPOLEON AND THE CHURCH

Where did Bonaparte stand on religion and the state?

Although Napoleon Bonaparte believed that the Roman Catholic Church favoured the Catholic monarchy of Austria over the revolutionary government of France, he never disavowed the institution and recognised its prominent role in the fabric of society. Napoleon was born and baptised Catholic, remained Catholic his entire life, and received the last rites of the Church on his deathbed. Wherever he led conquering armies, Napoleon proved to be pragmatic and tolerant, respectful of different religious customs and allowing the native populations to continue their practices without interference.

Nevertheless, Napoleon's personal religious views seem somewhat contradictory. Driven by insatiable ambition, he had gained an empire through force. Yet, later in life he is said to have admired the ability of Jesus Christ to influence the course of world events so profoundly with a message of love and salvation. Despite his Catholic upbringing, he once remarked, "All religions have been made by men." Therefore, it is likely that Napoleon considered the freedom to express religion as a tool to extend control of the masses, contributing to his ultimate goal of building an unrivalled empire.

Scholars, however, remain divided as to whether Napoleon nurtured a real faith in God or simply used his ancestral bond to the Catholic Church to advance his agenda of conquest.



"BY THE SPRING OF 1797 HE HAD DEFEATED FIVE ARMIES AND SENT VAST AMOUNTS OF VALUABLE LOOT BACK TO FRANCE"

like Venice and establishing a Cisalpine Republic, a new but very personal French satellite in the former Austrian territory of Milan.

When finally his troops began to cross the Alps in a push towards Vienna, the Austrians begged for an armistice. Napoleon elevated the negotiation into nothing less than peace preliminaries, undercutting recent French advances on the German front. The preliminaries signed at Leoben had won the entire war against Austria, but as a result, Napoleon had begun to dictate the Republic's entire foreign policy. The Peace of Campo Formio a few months later

largely reflected the terms he had imposed in the previous negotiations.

Returning to Paris in triumph, Napoleon hid his political ambitions and behaved modestly in public, believing that "the pear was not ripe". He was now appointed to command an expedition against France's only remaining enemy, Great Britain. But whether sincerely or not, he advised that an invasion across the Channel was too risky.

It would be much more effective, he argued, to enable a strike at their wealth in India by taking control of the Isthmus of Suez. This meant conquering Egypt.



TOP Napoleon leading his men over the bridge at the Battle of Arcole against Austria in 1796

ABOVE Napoleon built a strong relationship and reputation with the French Army

RIGHT Napoleon wanted to emulate the achievements of Alexander the Great in his Egyptian campaign



The Rise of Napoleon

A famous painting of Napoleon at Arcole, by Antoine-Jean Gros

The prospect of Egypt also stirred Napoleon's romantic imagination with thoughts of emulating Alexander the Great. It would require vast military resources, but the Directory agreed to provide them, happy enough to remove his potentially dangerous presence from the centre of power. A expedition of ships and soldiers crossed the Mediterranean with him in the spring of 1798, taking the island of Malta on the way. The resistance of Egypt's rulers was crushed at the Battle of the Pyramids. It looked like another effortless triumph.

COURTING DISASTER

In fact it was a strategic disaster. Egypt was part of the Turkish Empire. The Turks had done nothing to provoke this attack, and responded by declaring war. They even allied with their traditional enemies the Russians, who had their own designs in the Mediterranean. When the Austrians allowed Russian forces to cross their own territory to attack the French in Italy, the recently concluded peace fell apart. And the British navy under Nelson destroyed most of the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile, marooning Napoleon and his army. ▶



France now faced a new international coalition, which rapidly overturned all that Napoleon had established in Italy.

Orders recalling him from Egypt never arrived, and his army was ravaged by an unsuccessful march north through Palestine. Only when the blockading British sent him old newspapers did he learn of French reverses in Europe. After defeating a Turkish landing at the Battle of Aboukir, he resolved to return to France, abandoning the remnants of his army. Luck was with him once again. A voyage of just over six weeks avoided British patrols, and brought him back to France.

SEIZING THE MOMENT

The Directors dared not court-martial this general who had deserted his command: rather, the news of Aboukir had confirmed him as a popular hero. And one Director at least, Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, was already looking for a soldier to support plans for overturning the constitution.

For Napoleon, the 'pear' was now ripe, and the two men, though despising one

another, combined to organise a coup d'état. On 19 Brumaire (10 November 1799) the two legislative councils, surrounded by troops under Napoleon's command, agreed to suspend the constitution until a new one was drafted.

Napoleon took pride in the fact that it was a bloodless affair. If anyone was threatened physically, it was him. He briefly fainted. But it brought him the

"HIS WAS THE DOMINANT VOICE AMONG THE THREE CONSULS RUNNING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT"

supremacy he had long dreamed of. His was the dominant voice among the three Consuls running the interim government, and when the new constitution was finalised at the end of the year, it enshrined a pre-eminent First Consul who monopolised executive power. Nobody disputed his right to the role. "What's in the constitution?" ran a joke at the time. "Bonaparte" was the answer.

WINNING THE WAR

Contemplating his future during his first Italian campaign, Napoleon had said to himself, "I am the one who will end the Revolution". Now he had the authority to try it. He knew that his survival as head of state depended on it. The Revolution had created three basic concerns, but had been unable to resolve them: war, religion, and monarchy. War was the most immediately

pressing. Although the Republic had begun to fend off the forces of the coalition by the time Napoleon returned from Egypt, the Austrians were back in control of Italy and southern Germany, much as they had been in 1796. He planned to deal with them in the same way as before. In the spring of 1800 he took them by surprise in crossing the Alps with a fresh army, and then confronted them at Marengo.

ABOVE-RIGHT Defeat to Nelson at Aboukir Bay, Egypt was a major blow to Napoleon

BELOW-RIGHT Napoleon's coup d'état of 18 Brumaire brought the Revolution to an end

BELOW Having taken power in France, Napoleon crossed the Alps to reclaim territory lost to Austria in Italy

BELOW-INSET Having crossed the Saint Bernard Pass in the Alps, Napoleon led the Marengo Campaign in Italy, driving the Austrians from the region





It was a battle he nearly lost, and the enemy was far from destroyed. But the Austrian commander sued for an armistice, so Napoleon was able to claim instant victory at the scene of his former triumphs. This time it still took another battle, won at Hohenlinden in Germany by the rival general, Jean Victor Marie Moreau, to bring the Austrians to the negotiating table. The First Consul characteristically claimed all the credit for bringing peace with victory to the continent with the Treaty of Lunéville signed in February 1801.



It was true that the Republic was still at war with Great Britain, but here luck once again intervened. A disagreement between King George III and prime minister William Pitt brought the latter's resignation, and his war-weary successor Henry Addington opened peace negotiations with France.

Preliminaries were agreed by October 1801, leading to a final settlement at Amiens in March the next year. The French revolutionary wars were at last fully concluded, and on terms highly favourable to France.

ENDING THE REVOLUTION

Peace was celebrated at a grand Easter Mass, which also marked the resolution of the religious problem. Ever since the French clergy had been subjected to an oath of loyalty in 1790, the church had been split. The pope had condemned the new Civil Constitution of the Clergy devised by the revolutionaries, as all priests, and their flocks, had been forced by the oath to choose between Paris and Rome. It was the deepest of all divides created by the Revolution. When the monarchy was overthrown and the king executed, counter-revolutionary ideology brought the claims of religion and royalism together. In 1795 the Republic renounced all religious affiliations, and while Napoleon was in Egypt, French forces marched on Rome and brought the pope as a prisoner back to France, where he died.

But during his earlier Italian campaigns Napoleon had been impressed by papal authority, and when in the spring of 1800 a new pope was finally elected, the First





Consul offered a deal with what he saw as the only power able to deliver one. Facing down the hostility even of most of his political collaborators and the army, he embarked on months of negotiation with Rome that he said was the most difficult thing he ever accomplished. But in the end Pope Pius VII accepted a Concordat restoring public worship in France under strict state control. The effect was to defuse the most potent source of resistance to the consular regime, and to rob royalism not only of its spiritual but also its political legitimacy.

RESTORING MONARCHICAL POWER

When Napoleon took power, many royalists hoped that like General Monck

in England in 1660, this soldier would restore the heirs of the executed king to a throne. The Bourbon pretender even wrote urging him to do so. After Marengo, he got his reply. Napoleon politely refused. As in 1796, he had tasted power, and would not give it up now. Collaborators had been urging him from the start to make himself a monarch, and soon enough his consular term was extended from ten years to life. But life was the problem: if Napoleon should die, could the new regime survive? Various assassination attempts emphasised the danger to the regime.

The answer seemed to be to make his authority hereditary. He professed not to want it. "I have made kings," he said, "without wishing to be one", and during the peace of Amiens there were no serious

ABOVE-LEFT
Napoleon reviewing his troops after the Battle of Marengo

ABOVE-RIGHT
Defeat at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 was surrounded by resounding victories on the continent for Napoleon

ABOVE-INSET
Admiral Nelson and Napoleon are thought to have had a begrudging respect for one another

threats to his life. But when in 1803 the peace broke down, the British supported new plots against him. He needed to found a dynasty to ensure an orderly succession. The move was underpinned, like every increase in his power, by a rigged referendum in which the Nation could be said to have endorsed his monarchy: not just as a king, but a hereditary emperor. He crowned himself on 2 December 1804. The Revolution was finally over.

WARS OF CONQUEST

The renewal of war had pushed him into taking the throne, but he welcomed both. He loved waging war, and he had not taken the field for four years. He blamed the British for the breakdown, and began to assemble and train an invasion army

THE IRON CROWN Why Napoleon chose this simple circlet for his Italian coronation

When Napoleon crowned himself king of Italy on 26 May 1805, he placed the Iron Crown of Lombardy on his own head and declared, "God gave it to me, beware whoever touches it."

The crown is one of the oldest royal insignias in Christendom. This circlet of gold and gemstones was supposedly made for St Helena around a central band of iron that was once a nail on the cross. For centuries the crown had been used in the coronations of the kings of Italy. Charlemagne himself wore it when he was crowned king of the Lombards in the 8th century, as did many Holy Roman Emperors who came after.

Napoleon would certainly have appreciated Charlemagne's connection with the Iron Crown of Lombardy. In conquering Italy, he had followed in the footsteps of that legendary monarch and just like Charlemagne before him, had every intention to expand his own empire across the continent.

Napoleon founded the Order of the Iron Crown in 1805 and on its insignia, the French Imperial Eagle familiar from the banners of the Grande Armée is depicted atop the Iron Crown. This forever united a potent symbol of ancient power and God's chosen with that of the emperor of the French.



on the Channel coast. Whether he really thought, any more than in 1798, that a landing in England was possible, is uncertain. In any case Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in October 1805 destroyed any hopes of controlling the Channel, and the 'Grand Army' had already marched away some weeks before that to confront a

king, Frederick William III, and his family retreating into Russian protection. At Eylau in February 1807 the Grand Army held the Russians to a bloody draw, but at Friedland in June the Czar's army was roundly defeated. The war was over, and the emperors Napoleon and Alexander came to terms a few weeks later, famously

"THE MOVE WAS UNDERPINNED, LIKE EVERY INCREASE IN HIS POWER, BY A RIGGED REFERENDUM"

new Austro-Russian alliance determined to curb the upstart emperor's seemingly limitless ambitions.

The next two years brought Napoleon's career to the peak of its success. At the head of the superbly trained Grand Army, he defeated all his continental enemies. In 1805 he routed the Austrians at Ulm and Austerlitz, and imposed losses on them far more severe than at Campo Formio. The Russians were also defeated at Austerlitz, but struck a new alliance with Prussia, alarmed and humiliated by the expansion of French power in Germany.

The Prussians in their turn found themselves routed at Jena in 1806, their

face to face on a raft moored at Tilsit on the River Niemen.

THE TURNING POINT

Prussia was the main loser at Tilsit, but the Russians also agreed to cooperate in a new French policy designed to defeat the British: the continental system. Upon his triumphant entry to the Prussian capital in October 1806, Napoleon had issued the Berlin Decree, designed to blockade the British Isles and exclude British trade from the continent: economic warfare on a grand scale. But in order to make it work, the whole continental coastline needed to be sealed off.

This policy became the underlying driving force of the new Napoleonic empire. It led to the absorption of the whole of Italy, with Napoleon's brother Joseph initially becoming king of Naples. And from 1808 it brought a determined push to control the Iberian Peninsula. But it was here that Napoleon's famous luck began to run out. Neither Spain nor Portugal were easily subdued, and their resistance afforded the British a continental foothold. In what became the Peninsular War, or what Napoleon called his 'Spanish ulcer', they were never dislodged. It was still a long road to Napoleon's downfall, but the decline began on the other side of the Pyrenees. ○

BELOW-INSET
Napoleon continued to have success on the Continent, if not at sea

BOTTOM-INSET
Uprisings against French rule, such as in Madrid in 1808, were a regular concern for Napoleon

BOTTOM Napoleon was crowned emperor of France on 2 December 1804





GALLA PLACIDIA THE LAST ROMAN

The 5th century is remembered as a time of Roman decline and fall, but through Galla Placidia's eyes it looks very different

Written by Emma Southon

When we talk about the Roman Empire in the 5th century CE, we usually find ourselves

using words like 'decline' and 'fall' an awful lot. Traditional narratives focus away from the city of Rome and make it appear as degraded and powerless and finally violated by its sack in 410 CE. Constantinople was ascendant; Rome lost its lustre. If we shift our perspective a tiny bit, though, away from battles, we can see that a different story can be told about 5th century Rome and the western empire. By looking at Galla Placidia, empress of Rome, we can see through her how brightly Rome still shone in the lives and imaginations of those who lived at the end of the empire.

Galla Placidia was born somewhere around 390 CE, the only daughter of emperor Theodosius the Great and his second wife. Historians termed her father 'great' because he

EXPERT BIO



DR EMMA SOUTHON

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was the last to rule the whole Roman empire alone, east and west, under the power of a single man. Upon his death, when Placidia was about five, his two sons inherited a throne each. Arcadius took the throne in Constantinople while Honorius, aged just ten, settled in Ravenna to rule the west. Galla Placidia travelled to the west where Honorius set up court in Ravenna, but she chose to live in Rome. And there she stayed through sieges and famines, until 410 CE when Alaric led his Gothic army into the city and kidnapped Galla Placidia as a hostage.

Placidia was the only member of the imperial family to witness the epoch-ending breach of Rome's walls and the only imperial woman to ever be taken into the custody of a foreign enemy. As refugees poured out of Italy and the shockwaves reverberated around the empire, Galla Placidia, aged maybe 20, was carried off into Gaul by the army who had been terrifying the Romans for decades. ►

It was, perhaps, a surprise to her to learn that Alaric's Goths were not monstrous, semi-human 'barbarians' but were simply people who desperately wanted Roman legitimacy and had very similar goals to her brothers. When Alaric died and his famously handsome brother, Athaulf, took over leadership, Placidia shocked the Roman world by uniting the Romans and Goths in marriage. As a wedding gift, Athaulf gave her 50 handsome men and a plate full of precious gems. Of course, we don't know how Placidia felt about her new husband, the king of the Goths, but we do know that she ended the Gothic wars with her decision, and their marriage was celebrated by contemporaries as a 'divine gift'. The emperors of Rome and Constantinople now counted Athaulf as their brother-in-law. And the union was sealed even tighter when, in 415 CE, Galla Placidia gave birth to her first son, baby Theodosius, the first and only imperial Romano-Goth.

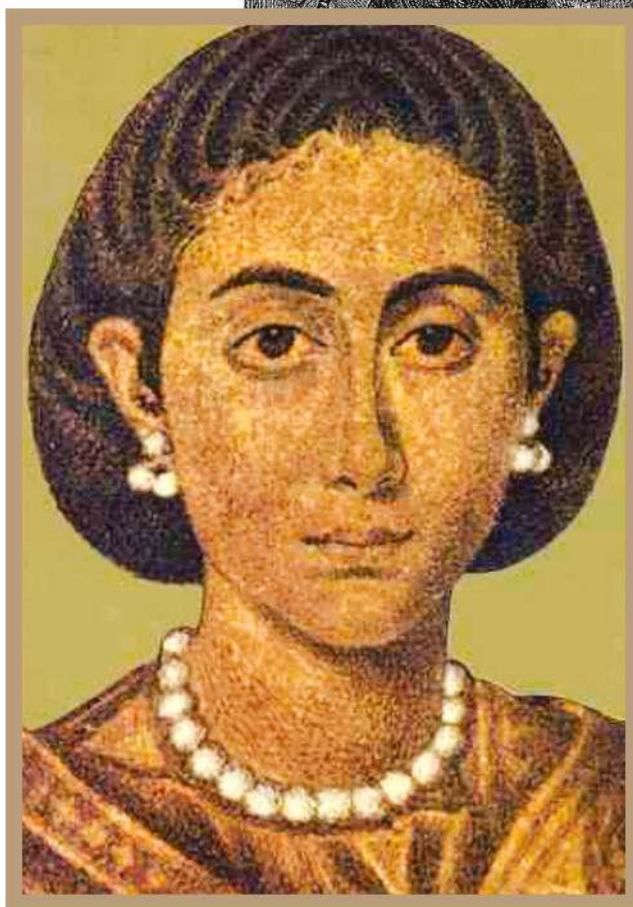
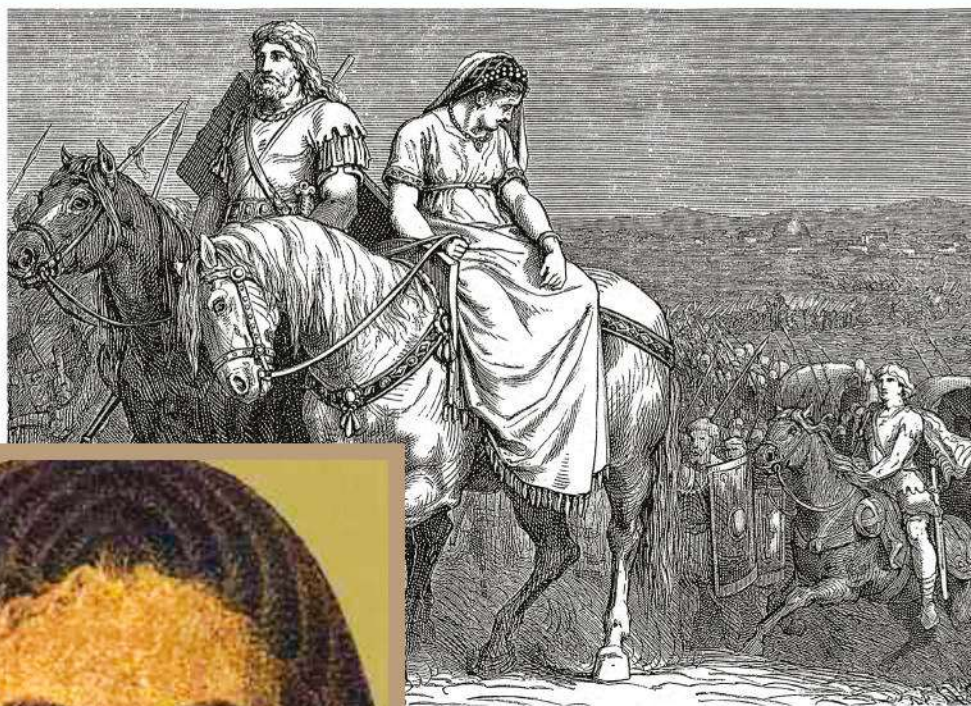
This union could not last. The baby died within a few months and Athaulf was assassinated shortly after. His successors were less keen on the Roman princess and so, in 417 CE, they handed her back to her brother's general in exchange for land in Gaul and a contract to work for the Roman army. Galla Placidia returned to the Roman fold after six years with the Goths, with her own personal retinue of Gothic soldiers in tow. Immediately upon arriving at her brother's court in Ravenna, Honorius coerced his half-sister into an unwanted marriage with his general Constantius. She repeatedly rejected pressures to marry him and was eventually physically forced into the ceremony. Rumours spread that Constantius had only negotiated Galla's return because he wanted to marry into the imperial family. Despite her profound reluctance, Galla was an obedient wife and she had two more children with Constantius, a daughter and a son. She provided her brother with an heir and then moved on to shape her own life.

At 28 years old, Galla Placidia's life had thus far been shaped by men moving her around as a pawn in political games, constantly being married to score political points whether she consented or not. After having her second son, though, she began to make her own destiny and she turned her attention to the Church. A devout Catholic Christian, Galla Placidia

RIGHT A captive of the Goths, Galla Placidia's marriage to Athaulf, king of the Visigoths, shocked the Romans

BELOW-RIGHT Pope Leo I kneels to Attila the Hun, drawn 470 CE

FAR-RIGHT Galla Placidia was committed to her Christian faith



engaged with the Church as both a patron and as an advisor, and she developed for herself a powerful role. Her most famous and spectacular gift to the Church was the building in Ravenna now known as the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, not because she was buried there but because she built it as part of a larger (now destroyed) church. The Mausoleum is a beautiful jewel box of a room, decorated with breathtaking glass mosaics across its walls and ceilings depicting saints, apostles and a magnificent sky lit with glittering stars. In total, Galla built three churches

ABOVE Galla Placidia ruled the western empire as her son's regent for 12 years

in Ravenna and lavished gifts of gold and money on existing churches.

This kind of patronage made a girl popular with bishops, and allowed her to exert influence over them, which gave her the power to control political events. In 419 CE, she involved herself in a crisis in Rome over papal elections – in the middle of the Pelagian theological controversy, two men had had themselves elected pope and tensions between the rival factions escalated into riots. Both bishops and the secular magistrates in Rome turned to Placidia personally for help and she launched herself into finding a resolution. She convinced Honorius to remove both popes from Rome and then wrote letters to the most significant bishops across Europe and Africa asking them to meet with her and make a ruling, ideally one favouring her preferred candidate. One of these letters, to none other than Saint Augustine of Hippo, survives in papal archives, giving us one of the very few examples of a woman writing in the ancient world, acting as a go-between for the emperor and

“PLACIDIA SHOCKED THE ROMAN WORLD BY UNITING THE ROMANS AND GOTHs IN MARRIAGE”



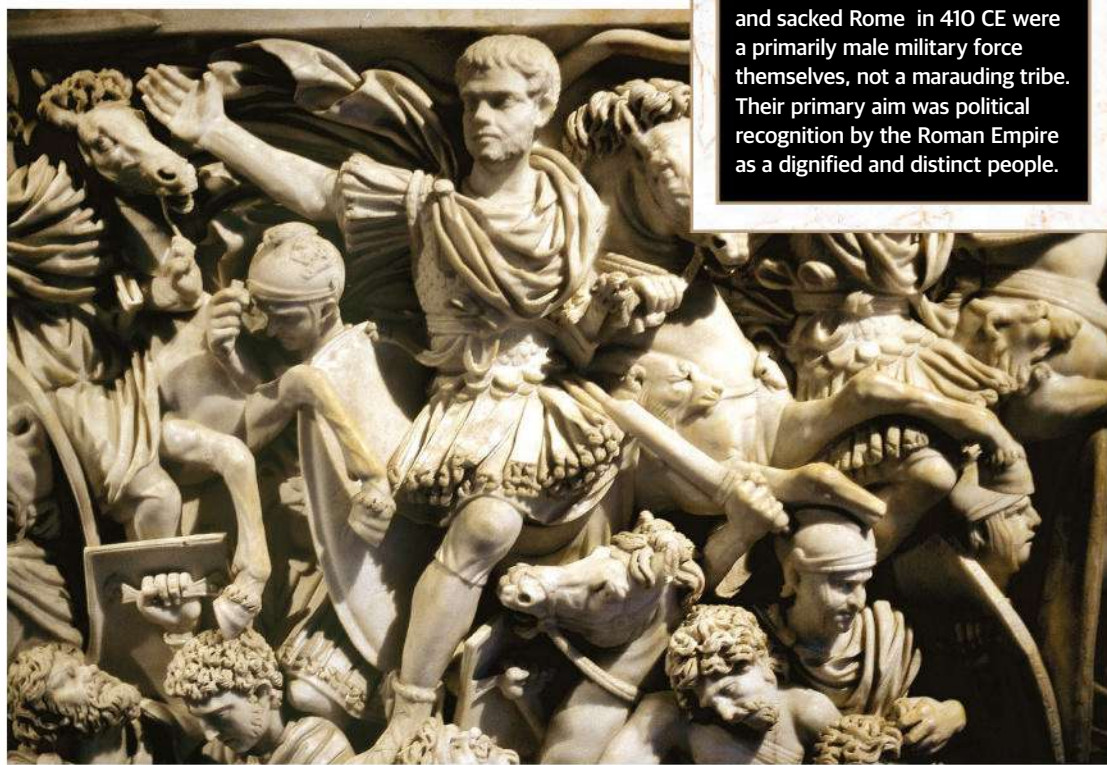
WHO ARE THE GOTHs?

A quick guide to a people seeking independence and recognition

Originally deriving from Eastern Europe, around Moldova and Ukraine, the Goths came into contact with the Roman Empire in 376 CE as refugees on the Eastern side of the Danube fleeing the 'Hunnian storm'. The Romans treated them as an enemy, allowing some but not others to cross the river, failing to feed them properly and allegedly forcing them into slavery. This treatment led inevitably to wars. The first wars came to a conclusion in 383 CE when Theodosius I defeated the Goths, however he allowed them to settle as a semi-autonomous state within Roman territory. Following a decade of peaceful co-existence, Alaric - a Gothic general in the Roman army - led a mutiny that resulted in the Sack of Rome. The Goths who crossed the Danube in 376 CE were a people of all ages and sexes fleeing an army, but the Goths who followed Alaric and sacked Rome in 410 CE were a primarily male military force themselves, not a marauding tribe. Their primary aim was political recognition by the Roman Empire as a dignified and distinct people.

the Church. In the end, her work was for nothing because one of the popes invaded Rome and was promptly declared an anti-pope and executed, but her involvement highlighted her intense interest in church politics and theology.

In 421 CE, Galla Placidia became a true empress when Honorius raised her husband to be his co-emperor. Just seven months later, she became a dowager Augusta when Constantius died, igniting riots on the streets of Ravenna and accusations that Galla exerted too much control over the Gothic auxiliaries in the army. The siblings fell out violently. Furious and insulted, Galla Placidia packed up her children and travelled to Constantinople where she appealed to the child emperor, her nephew Theodosius II, for moral support. Conveniently resolving the situation, Honorius died almost as soon as Galla arrived in the eastern capital. Theodosius II ratified her son, Valentinian III, as emperor of the western empire and, as he was just six years old, installed Galla Placidia as his regent.



WHO'S WHO IN 5TH CENTURY POLITICS

The big names in Rome
and beyond in Placidia's era

AETIUS

Roman general under Valentinian recruited by Galla Placidia. Called "the last of the Romans" by Procopius, he defended the empire against the Huns and fought Attila on a number of occasions.



ALARIC

So called King of the Goths. Once a general in the Roman army, he served under Theodosius I before mutinying due to lack of recognition and leading Gothic troops against the Roman Empire.



ARCADIUS

Eastern Roman emperor 383-408 CE. Half brother of Galla Placidia. He became co-emperor with his father at the age of five.



ATHAULF

King of the Goths following the death of Alaric, and Galla Placidia's first husband. He developed the Goths into a state and a political power in Gaul before being assassinated in 415 CE leaving Placidia a widow.



CONSTANTIUS III

Honorius's magister militum, he led the effort to recover Placidia from the Goths and then married her against her will. Father of Justa Grata Honoria and Valentinian III. He became co-ruler with Honorius in 421 CE and died just months later.



TOP Galla Placidia gold coin with Victoria holding a cross on obverse

ABOVE Obelisk of Theodosius, Constantinople, showing the defeated 'barbarians' submitting to him

Galla Placidia, now empress in her own right, travelled triumphantly back to Italy where she easily put down a number of male challengers to her throne and held an old-fashioned celebration of her son's reign. On 23 October 425 CE, Galla Placidia paraded through the streets of Rome; Valentinian III became the first emperor proclaimed in Rome for over a century. Just 15 years after the city was sacked by Alaric and Placidia was taken as a helpless hostage, Rome was full of people, riches and glory again as she reclaimed her home, now a triumphant empress leading her retinue of loyal Goths. She celebrated

and ethnic diversity, allowing polytheists to worship freely in Rome, embracing both her Gothic auxiliaries and incorporating Huns into her administration. Her general, Aetius, had been raised as a Hunnic hostage and she met him when he led an army of Huns against her at the start of her regency. She liked him and gave him a job and some land for his men. She allowed him to blossom and he came to be remembered as one of the greatest Roman generals of all time.

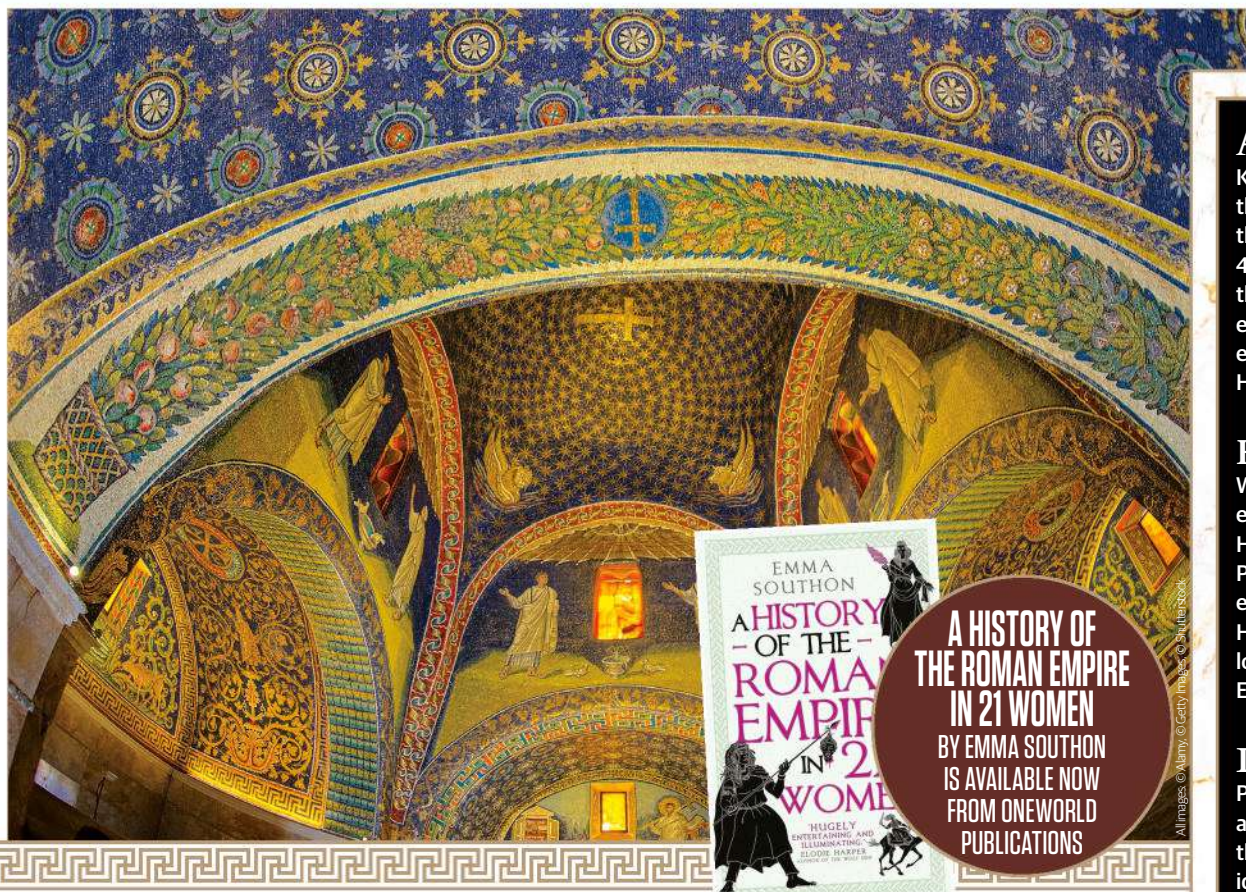
The traditional narrative of female regents is that they always end badly. They fail to give up power to their sons or they

“GALLA PLACIDIA SPENT HER LAST YEARS ENGAGED IN THEOLOGICAL DEBATES OF THE HIGHEST ORDER”

her family and the resilience and undying power of the empire as the Senate and people of Rome cheered her name.

For the next 12 years, Galla Placidia ruled the western Roman empire as Valentinian III's regent and she ruled with remarkable energy and vigour. She engaged with the Senate in Rome and gave them a sense of dignity and importance they had missed for a long time. She built and enlarged churches in Ravenna, Rome and Jerusalem, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. She embraced religious

overstep the limits of their sex. History is littered with queen mothers who died at the hands of sons exerting independence or jealous male courtiers. Galla Placidia refused to fit that narrative. Instead, she ruled well in his name and, when the time came, she found him a perfect wife in Eudoxia, daughter of Theodosius II. Eudoxia arrived in Italy from Constantinople with gifts for her husband-to-be and his mother: the chains that held St Peter in Jerusalem, which can still be seen in Rome today. The pair were married



in 437 CE in Thessaloniki, Greece and, as Valentinian III stepped into adulthood as a husband, Galla Placidia gracefully stepped out of the political spotlight.

Placidia lived for 12 more years as the mother of the emperor, becoming a grandmother to two granddaughters and returning to her role as a religious negotiator and political advisor. In particular, Placidia became a ferocious defender of the role of the pope and the city of Rome in orthodox Christianity. When a complex theological crisis emerged in the eastern empire, Placidia became intimately involved, writing letters and tracts urging both Theodosius II and eastern bishops to recognise the importance of a universal orthodoxy among Christians that derived exclusively from the pope in Rome. "It is fitting," she wrote, "that in all things we should show respect for this glorious city which is the mistress of the whole earth." To modern eyes, Rome after 410 CE seems diminished in comparison to the grandeur of Constantinople. But to Galla Placidia, and many like her who still lived there, it remained the "bright light of all the world."

Galla Placidia spent her last years engaged in theological debates of the highest order and in close contact with Pope Leo I, but she also remained a part of her son's court. The final crisis of her life involved her daughter, Justa Honoria, who lived in Rome and had no impact

ABOVE The beautiful Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna, Italy

on the worlds of religion or politics until the day in 449 CE when she accidentally proposed marriage to Attila the Hun. Honoria had been caught in an affair with a member of her staff and forced into an unwanted betrothal with a more suitable man in the aftermath. In a fit of rebellion, Honoria wrote to Attila, leader of the Huns who was, at the time, terrorising the eastern empire. In the letter she asked for his help and for sanctuary with him and included her ring as a guarantee. Attila, rightly or wrongly, took this as a proposal of marriage, accepted and unilaterally declared that the whole western empire was her dowry. War ensued. Valentinian III prepared to have Honoria executed for her treason and for starting a war, but Placidia maintained enough power in the court to persuade him to spare her. A few months later, exhausted, Galla Placidia died in her sleep on 27 November 450 CE. She was buried in Rome, next to her first son.

A lover of the city, Galla Placidia Augusta's life story shows us that the end of the western Roman empire was not all fire and brimstone, battle and suffering. She shows us that the Goths were not mere 'barbarians', but fathers and husbands, that Rome was not degraded and empty, but glorious and glorified, that 'decline' was not a word on anyone's lips. Through the eyes of the last Roman empress, we can see the 5th century in a whole new light. ○

ATTILA

Known as Attila the Hun, ruler of the Hunnic Empire 434-453 CE. One of the empire's most feared enemies, he invaded both the eastern and western halves. The Huns derived from Eurasia.



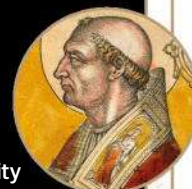
HONORIUS

Western Roman emperor 393-423 CE. Half-brother of Galla Placidia, he became emperor when he was ten. His reign was characterised by the loss of Britain from the Roman Empire and the Sack of Rome.



LEO I

Pope 440-461 CE, also known as Leo the Great. Expanded ideas of papal authority with Placidia's support and persuaded Attila not to invade Italy in 452 CE.



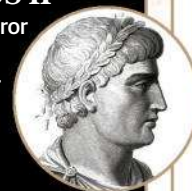
THEODOSIUS I

Also known as Theodosius the Great. Galla Placidia's father and the last emperor to ever rule both the eastern and western halves of the empire alone from 379-395 CE.



THEODOSIUS II

Eastern Roman emperor 401-450 CE. Son of Arcadius, co-emperor at nine months old and sole emperor at seven. Galla Placidia's nephew. His sister, Pulcheria, acted as his regent.



VALENTINIAN III

Western Roman emperor 425-455 CE. Son of Placidia. His reign was characterised by battles with the Huns. He killed Aetius during a power struggle and was in turn assassinated by Aetius's bodyguard.



Reevaluating Agincourt

Michael Livingston offers a fresh perspective on this brutal, landmark battle

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

EXPERT BIO



MICHAEL LIVINGSTON

An award-winning historical author and professor at The Citadel, the military college of South Carolina, Livingston has written books such as *Never Greater Slaughter* and *Crécy: Battle Of Five Kings*.

Like Hastings, Waterloo and Trafalgar, the Battle of Agincourt has a large and venerated place in military history. Considered to be one of the greatest English military victories, the recently crowned Henry V led his numerically smaller force to an unexpected triumph against the Kingdom of France. Taking place on 25 October 1415, in the later half of the Hundred Years' War, it was a battle that cemented the already growing reputation of the young English monarch. The underdog story, its place within history and the heroic image of Henry have combined to make Agincourt one of the most analysed and discussed battles from history, but do we understand it correctly? Historian Michael Livingston has gone back to the ground itself to reevaluate the facts, discovering some fascinating new details along the way, for his new book *Agincourt: Battle Of The Scarred King*.

obviously had a great deal written about it in the past?

I spent many years investigating the case of the Battle of Crécy in 1346, and anyone doing that work can hardly prevent thinking about Agincourt in 1415. Though separated by nearly seven decades in history, these two great English victories are separated by only a half hour or so on the ground today. Visiting one, it was easy to visit the other, and what I found

BELOW A miniature from a French manuscript on Charles VII, 1484



quite quickly was that the traditional story of Agincourt, like the traditional story of Crécy, didn't seem to fit with what we were being told about the battlefield. And in both cases, attempts to find archaeological evidence to back up the traditional story had come up painfully short: in the case of Agincourt, Tim Sutherland, one of our finest conflict archaeologists, had already raised the question of whether we had the battle in the right spot. So as I closed the case on Crécy, it seemed only natural to open the case on Agincourt. Perhaps I'd find that everything we'd been told was right after all. Perhaps not. The only way to know was to dive in.

Did any of your work researching the Battle of Crécy for your previous book help to inform your research for the Battle of Agincourt?

It absolutely did. When I was putting together my latest account of my research on the events of 1346, *Crécy: Battle Of Five Kings* (Osprey, 2022), I was finding new ways of using modern technologies like LiDAR to not just see the landscape as it is

What drew you to reevaluate Agincourt, an iconic battle that has





today but to reconstruct it as it was in the past. Tasks that a decade ago might have taken me days or even weeks could now be done in a couple of hours. I'd likewise learned a great deal about how to wrestle with our primary sources: in particular the need to go back to the original languages rather than relying on translations. One of the issues we have with this work – and it touched directly on both battles – is that well-meaning translators, instead of translating what a source said, would translate what they thought it *ought* to say based on the story that everyone 'knew'. They were, in effect, creating evidence to support a pre-ordained conclusion. That's simply not how we should investigate the past.

What were some of the big surprises for you as you went back to the original sources?

There were many, but the biggest surprise was the consistency with which the sources – especially what appear to be the best of them, like a chaplain of Henry V who was there that day – indicated a battle taking place closer to Maisoncelle than to Azincourt.

At first glance, this isn't a massive difference. My position of Henry's banner at the start of the battle is only 1,200 yards or so away from a more traditional location. For comparison, if I'm right about Crécy, that battle was fought 3.5 miles away from where the maps all put it today. But when we begin reconstructing the battle, however, profound effects emerge from that small shift. Lines fall into place. Tactics make sense. And a very different

Everything before it was discovered in the British Library in the 1980s is uncertain. That said, I suggest that it dates from earlier in the campaign, around 12-13 October, when the French had cut off Henry V's march at the Somme and were anticipating a pitched battle near Abbeville. I do think, though, that it continued to be an influence on French plans, up to and including the battle of Agincourt on 25 October. The French didn't exactly follow

“NO MATTER WHICH SIDE YOU WERE ON, THIS WAS A HORRIFIC EVENT”

picture emerges of how Henry V won a battle that on paper he had no business winning.

What did you learn from looking at the French battle plan for Agincourt?

The French battle plan is an absolutely fascinating document. It is one of the very few battle plans from the Middle Ages to survive the centuries, and in truth we don't know how or why it survived. Was it captured during the campaign? Was it taken from a prisoner after the battle?

the plan that day, but we can see bits and pieces of it. The most maddening question to me, though, is *when* the English got hold of it. If they had it from prisoners captured near the Somme, which is possible, then Henry had a good sense of what his enemy might have been planning when it came to battle. It's interesting to think about the possibility, but we just don't know.

What is your understanding now of what it would have been like for soldiers in the field on that day?



All images © Getty Images

It would have been a nightmare. No matter which side you were on, this was a horrific event. I have seen every attempt to recreate it on film, and none of them do justice to what the reality would have been. This is probably for the best. Here's how I describe the moment of impact when the French charge struck the English line, which was well into the carnage of the longbows:

Few in the French front line survived the collision. Pushed backwards by the English, pushed forward by their countrymen, they struggled for footing. Slipping. Falling. Pinioned by spears. Stacked up and then smothered in the mud. And whenever one man went down – living or dead – more surged over him.

The uneven landscape of the bodies added to the uneasy footing in the most desperate moment of men's lives.

It's bad enough to read these words, to imagine the awful horror of it. But to have lived it must have produced a particular trauma. Shakespeare has Henry V talk of men showing the scars they'd earned in the fight, but it's essential for us to recognise that not all battle scars would have been physical.

ABOVE-LEFT One of many 'romantic' depictions of the battle, this one with Henry defeating Jean I, Duke of Alençon

ABOVE-MIDDLE This famous upset victory established Henry V's legend as a warrior king

ABOVE-RIGHT Henry had only been king for about 18 months when he led his men at Agincourt

Are there any details or truths of Agincourt that you would have liked to have discovered but have been lost to time?

The thing one most hopes for is archaeological evidence. As I said, the traditional site hasn't turned up anything. It would be marvellous if new interest in the battle could lead to funding for a new archaeological investigation that would include the areas closer to Maisoncelle. Whether such a survey proved my suggestions right or wrong, we'd have more clues. And as I say in the book, my aim is to get history right, not to be personally right.

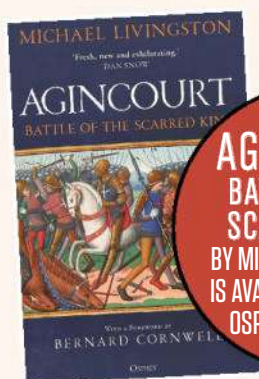
Beyond that, the missing piece of data that frustrates me the most is that question of when the English were able to get hold of the French battle plan.

The scenario that makes the most sense to me is that Henry V had it in hand on that fateful day. And while the French didn't follow it to the letter, this nevertheless would have given him an

enormous advantage in planning for the fight. Like the capture of Enigma machines in World War II, the capture of those battle plans surely would have been a story worth telling!

Are there any misconceptions of Agincourt that you hope to dispel with your book?

I never go into a project with the intention of changing the story or proving one thing or another. I simply want to uncover the truth as best I can discern it. That said, Agincourt has become so truly mythic that one cannot help but face many popular misconceptions. Some of them are quite strong, like the baseless idea that the 'V' sign came from the fact that the French threatened to cut off the fingers of English longbowmen. But the misconceptions that most interest me are the subtle ones, like the appreciation for what Henry V accomplished evolving into a conception that he could do no wrong on the campaign or in the battle. These interest me not just for what the truth of them tells us about our past, but for what continued belief in them tells us about ourselves in the present. ○



**AGINCOURT:
BATTLE OF THE
SCARRED KING
BY MICHAEL LIVINGSTON
IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM
OSPREY PUBLISHING**

BAYARD RUSTIN THE MAN BEHIND MLK

Rediscover the gay, 'communist', pacifist mastermind behind the 1963 March on Washington who was Dr King's right-hand man

Written by Luther Adams - Free Man of Color, PhD

Bayard Rustin was an outsider, recognised as a brilliant organiser, strategist, and thinker whose vision and activism was the foundation for modern movements for Peace, Civil Rights and Gay Liberation. Rustin opposed nuclear arms testing in Africa and Asia, and offered strategic support to independence movements in Ghana, Nigeria and Zambia. His association

with communism and socialism, his homosexuality, and later his turn towards the right, led contemporaries and historians to push him out of the limelight and into the shadows.

Bayard, his name pronounced like 'fired', was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1912. He was raised by his grandparents. Julia "Ma" Rustin was a strong influence, introducing Quaker values of non-violence, recognition of the equality of all people, and the

importance of aligning words with deeds. Bayard Rustin was attractive, athletic, artistic, academically inclined and an aspiring activist. According to Rustin, this activism "did not spring from my being gay, or, for that matter, from my being Black... it is rooted fundamentally in my Quaker upbringing... Those values are based on the concept of a single human family and the belief that all members of that family are equal."

JIM CROW CAN'T TEACH DEMOCRACY

From Books, Roads, Whiskies

EXPERT BIO

© Luther Solomon Adams



LUTHER ADAMS - FREE MAN OF COLOR

Luther Adams - Free Man of Color, is Associate Professor of Ethnic, Gender and Labor Studies at the University of Washington, Tacoma. He publishes research on Black history and culture and is the author of *Way Up North In Louisville: African American Migration In The Urban South, 1930-1970*.



Rustin working as a spokesman for the Citywide Committee for Integration in 1964

© Getty Images

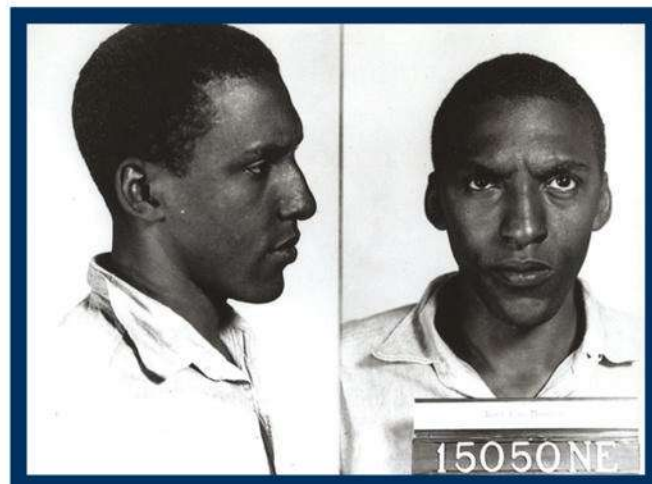
As a high school student, he challenged segregation at the local Warner Theater. He was arrested, and jailed - the first of many arrests. He attended college at Wilberforce and later Cheyney State on musical scholarships and trained at the American Friends Service Committee peace camp. But he was dismissed from both schools, either for refusing to join the Reserve Officer Training Corps, organising student protests on campus, or reasons not yet known. Rustin shared his growing awareness of his homosexuality with Ma Rustin, who in turn encouraged and affirmed him.

Like many during the Great Depression Rustin was out of work. He moved to Harlem, making his living singing at Café Society in Greenwich Village, and performing with folk singer Josh White and the Carolinas. Around this time Rustin joined the Young Communist League, impressed by their defence of the 'Scottsboro Boys' (nine African American teens accused of rape in Alabama), opposition to racial inequality, fascism and war. His membership was brief. Appalled

by new directives from Moscow that ended protest against white supremacy and began support for war, Rustin left disillusioned and fiercely anti-communist.

He remained a leftist, however. In the early 1940s, socialists AJ Muste and A Philip Randolph became his mentors. Muste was the leader of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an interfaith peace organisation. Randolph was the organiser of The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first Black union in America. Together the three organised the 1941 March on Washington Movement, a national effort to desegregate the military and defence industries. They cancelled the march planned for 1 July, 1941 when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 desegregating defence industries. Combined with WWII labour shortages, 8802 created a window of economic opportunity seized by more than half the Black population in the US South, heading North and West known as the Second Great Migration.

Rustin united peace, labour and civil rights to catalyse social justice



TOP-RIGHT The mugshots from Rustin's arrest for failing to register for the draft, 1945

RIGHT Rustin and his team only had eight weeks to organise the historic march

BELOW Rustin speaks to a 250,000+ crowd at the March on Washington



All images © Getty Images

movements working through the Fellowship of Reconciliation. He visited Japanese-American Relocation camps, protesting their internment. Rustin joined an interracial group on the Journey of Reconciliation, travelling the Upper South by bus to test a 1946 Supreme Court decision, *Morgan v Virginia*, outlawing segregation in interstate travel. The riders were threatened, beaten, and arrested. Rustin was sentenced to 60 days on a North Carolina chain gang. It turns out white supremacy trumped the law. Rustin refused to support war, writing to the draft board, "joyfully following the will of God, I regret that I must break the law of the State." He served a two-year sentence in federal prison and was moved to a high security prison for organising protests and "sexual misconduct". In an exchange of letters written while Rustin was in the penitentiary, Muste urged him to "discontinue a certain type of relationship." Not only was homosexuality seen as

Rustin organised the Southern Christian Leadership Conference as a vehicle for King's civil rights work, strategised and pushed him to more fully embrace non-violence. An 'older brother' and mentor, Rustin advised and guided King and the growing civil rights movement. Yet, friend and foe worried about his sexuality and wanted Rustin to go, or at least keep out of sight.

Still, 1960 was a pivotal year for Rustin. He debated integration versus separation with Malcolm X. Rustin proposed King protest the National Democratic Convention to pressure candidate John F Kennedy and the Democratic party to make good on the promise to enact civil rights legislation. The party called on the Black democratic power broker, Congressman Reverend Adam Clayton Powell to end the threat. He did, by suggesting he would start a rumour - Rustin and King were lovers.

"WE NEED, IN EVERY COMMUNITY, A GROUP OF ANGELIC TROUBLEMAKERS"

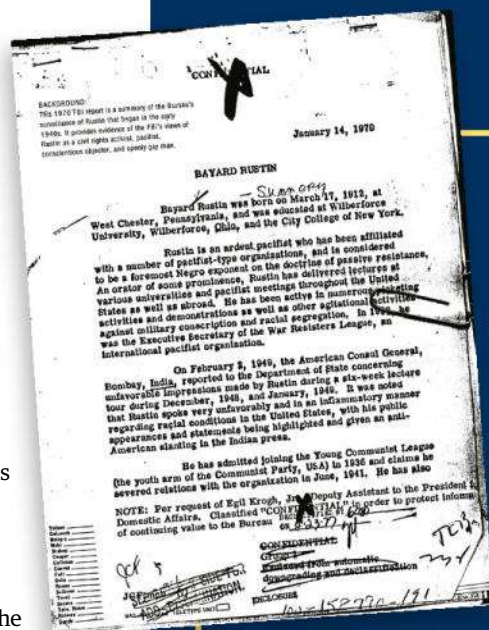
problematic, he also accused Rustin of promiscuity, of the "impulse to use and exploit" of "lying," of being a "playboy", and of being unfit to lead in a pacifist Christian organisation.

Following his release and the war, Rustin studied Gandhian non-violence in India and gained recognition in the peace movement as an authority on non-violence. He returned to the US fortified with the understanding that direct action and non-violence were a potent combination: "We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers... Our power is in our ability to make things unworkable. The only weapon we have is our bodies. And we need to tuck them in places so wheels don't turn."

In 1953 Rustin was arrested for "vagrancy/sexual perversion". According to the police report, a white man sat in the front seat while Rustin had sex with a young white man in the backseat of an Oldsmobile. Rustin's name was published in the local news, he served a 60-day sentence, and was registered as a sex offender. The Fellowship of Reconciliation fired him. Subsequently, Muste unsuccessfully attempted to block the War Resisters League from hiring Rustin. So, in 1955 when he arrived to support the on-going bus boycott in Montgomery, Martin Luther King, Jr knew Rustin was gay, and invited him to stay. To his dismay, King's home was an armed camp, non-violence was more a tactic than a principle.

King folded under the pressure and cast Rustin out. No simple matter of political strategy, in King's 1958 advice column in *Ebony* magazine, he responded to a young boy seeking his help who felt about boys the way he 'ought' to feel about girls, that homosexuality was a 'habit', a problem best solved with psychiatric care. James Baldwin stood alone in his rebuke of King, calling his capitulation a moral failure that caused him to lose the respect of youth. The civil rights community largely isolated Rustin. Social justice movements based on peace, on building "Beloved Community", exploited Rustin's skills, strategy and wisdom, but rejected him as a gay man. Ironically, the protest continued - without Rustin.

But in Rustin's absence, King floundered, failed in Albany and stalled in Birmingham. Meanwhile, Rustin and Randolph revisited the idea of a March ▶



FB EYES

Why the Federal Bureau of Investigation was watching Bayard Rustin

As a former communist, civil rights activist, pacifist, conscientious objector, and openly gay man, the FBI

deemed Rustin a threat and kept a close eye on him beginning in the 1940s. The FBI file on him included police reports, confidential surveillance, press clippings, copies of his writings, detailed reports of his comings and goings domestically and abroad, and speculated on his ties to the communist party.

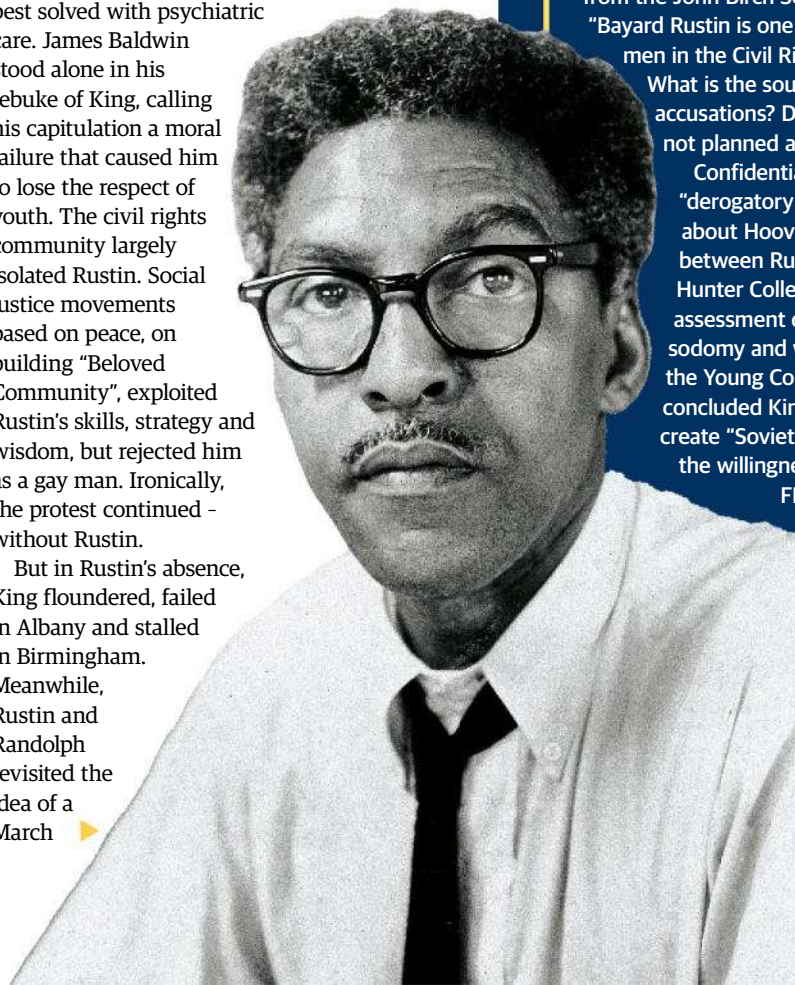
The FBI documented the erosion of King and Rustin's relationship, citing an inside source in June 1967 saying King "seldom mentions Rustin's name," and that King described Rustin as a "tired 'radical who wants to be secure and will no longer go out on a limb'."

His FBI file even included a complaint to J Edgar Hoover about a "radical liberal" teacher who commented on his son's essay on civil rights that claimed Rustin was a communist citing literature from the John Birch Society. The teacher wrote: "Bayard Rustin is one of the most respected men in the Civil Rights movement today.

What is the source of the communist accusations? Dr Martin Luther King has not planned any riots."

Confidential sources reported "derogatory comments" Rustin made about Hoover, and attended a debate between Rustin and Stokely Carmichael at Hunter College. The file included Hoover's assessment of Rustin as "convicted of sodomy and was an admitted member of the Young Communist League." The report concluded King's programme would help create "Soviet America." The FBI files reveal the willingness of the government (the

FBI's files include information obtained from the CIA, the Attorney General, and the police) to spy on its own citizens, break the law to uphold order, and the degree to which social justice movements were surveilled and sabotaged. Working in the cause of freedom was certainly a dangerous occupation.



on Washington. In civil rights circles neither Rustin or the idea of the march received a warm welcome.

In 1963, "Freedom Now!" resounded in the Black community. The FBI estimated there were more than 1,500 demonstrations in 38 states involving 40 per cent of the Black population in that one year. Violence increased in kind, as when NAACP worker Medgar Evers was murdered in his own driveway in Mississippi in retaliation to Blacks gaining the right to vote. In Birmingham children were bitten by police dogs and fire hosed, the brutality exposed on nightly TV.

The March on Washington drew inspiration and gravity from the age of abolition. 100 years after Emancipation, African Americans were still not free. Worse, they were urged to go slowly. As the movement stalled, King invited Rustin to join him again in Alabama as advisor and strategist, with an eye towards DC. With King's support other civil rights leaders agreed to join. The next hurdle was getting other leaders to accept Rustin's role. Most notable in his dissent was Roy Wilkins, president of the NAACP, whose objections were virulent - Rustin was a communist, a drafter dodger, promiscuous, and gay. His sentiments were echoed by Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, who entered

BELOW-LEFT
Rustin spent the later years of his life in a committed relationship, speaking up for gay rights

OPENLY GAY?

The question of Rustin being open about his sexuality is a point of contention



Much of the recent discussion of Rustin includes the idea that because he was 'openly gay' he was hidden from history, or that he can be recovered from obscurity as a 'gay hero' for his time. But what it really means to be 'openly gay' is seldom questioned.

Biographer John D'Emilio makes it clear, Rustin's main sexual attraction was to young white men. Davis Platt, a 19-year-old student at Columbia University who used to visit Bayard at the FOR (Fellowship of Reconciliation) offices, did not recall hiding their connection from Muste, although when Rustin was in prison they used the code name "Marie" to avoid detection. When he was asked by reporters about his sexuality Rustin's typical response was: No Comment.

Much of Rustin's 'openness' about his homosexuality was a result of the public nature of his arrests or efforts to discredit him and the civil rights movement by castigating him in public. His 1953 arrest fit this pattern. According to the police, Rustin waved at the two men and asked "if they were looking for a good time." He was cruising, he was arrested, had his name printed in a local paper and he registered as a sex offender (a posthumous pardon was given in 2020). This was the circumstance under which Rustin was 'openly gay'.

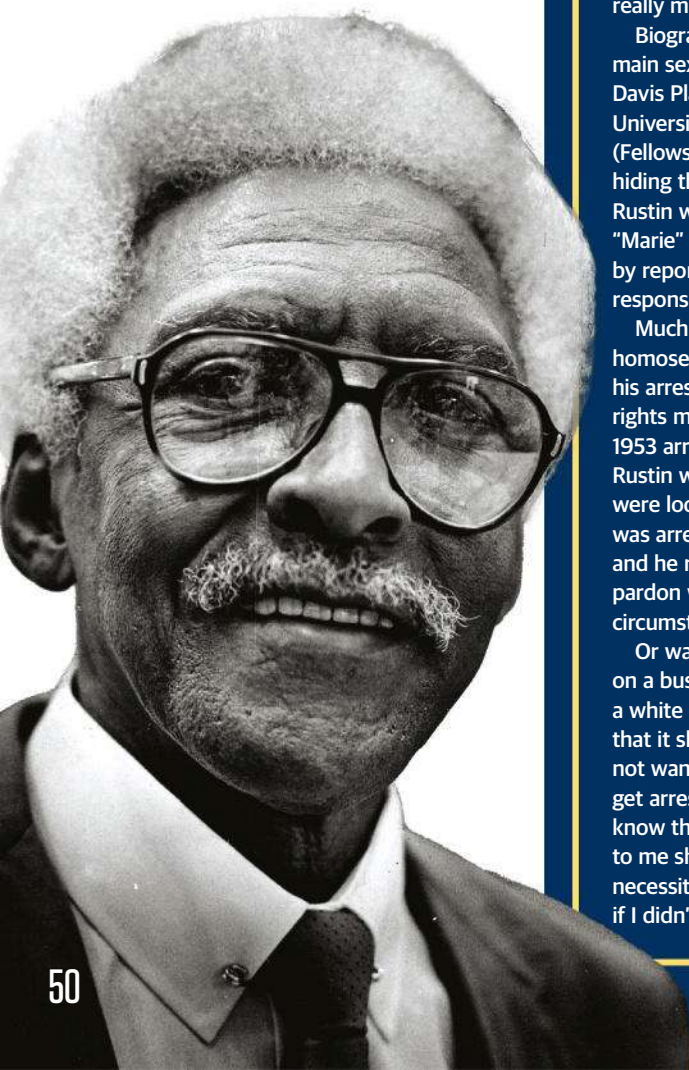
Or was it? Rustin linked challenging segregation on a bus with being out as a gay man. Encountering a white child, Rustin recalled: "I owe it to that child that it should be educated to know that Blacks do not want to sit in the back, and therefore I should get arrested letting all these white people in the bus know that I do not accept that. Now, it occurred to me shortly after that that it was an absolute necessity for me to declare homosexuality, because if I didn't I was a part of the prejudice."



into the Congressional Record news clippings of Rustin's 1953 arrest, a police booking slip, and a compromising photo of King taking a bath while talking with Rustin. Their efforts failed, and the march moved forward.

Rustin was left with the monumental task of planning a successful march in only eight weeks. His genius was in that he answered the call, his brilliance that he seemingly thought of it all. Headquartered at Utopia House in Harlem USA, Rustin was at his best: enthusiastic, effective, by some accounts "hyperactive", he thrived in this chaotic environment, working under pressure. The Great March required coordination across states, selecting captains and marshals, transportation, bathrooms, sandwiches (no mayonnaise as it spoiled in the heat), water, doctors, hotels, childcare, making and distributing thousands of signs - Rustin and his team handled it all. The march's \$75,280 budget covered salaries, rent, telephones, postage, printing, a \$1.00 per diem for volunteers to cover meals and gas. They also included money for people unemployed or too poor to afford to pay their own way.

As a march for "Jobs and Freedom" Rustin centred on ten concrete demands. Rustin's March on Washington Manual





ABOVE Rustin's relationship with Martin Luther King Jr was pivotal to the movement, but also had its ups and downs

LEFT Around a quarter of a million people attended the March on Washington, the brain child of Rustin, AJ Muste and A Philip Randolph

1963, 250,000 - 300,000 attendees made the march the biggest in US history. It was also peaceful. The 4,000 soldiers standing by were unnecessary, reflecting the fears of the government, not reality. There were celebrities too: Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Josephine Baker, Marlon Brando, Paul Newman and Sammy Davis Jr were in attendance. There were singers: Marian Anderson, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and Mahalia Jackson, with Rustin understanding that their presence generated media attention and positive support. Rustin ignored calls to integrate Black women into the programme as featured speakers; instead Rosa Parks, Daisy Bates and Josephine Baker spoke

of uprising and unrest in a time of burning and looting, decolonisation and revolution. It was clear to see that radicalism, not reform, was now the norm. As Black Power grew, and independence movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America did too, he remained a committed integrationist. Rustin moved right, opposing affirmative action, Black studies, and in *Black Power And Coalition Politics* he dismissed 'Black Power' as harmful "propaganda" lacking "any real value." He criticised the timing of King's Poor People's Campaign, and though a pacifist he supported Israel's Six Day War and advised King not to speak out against the Vietnam War. There is a time when silence is betrayal, but it was Rustin's vocal opposition to King that fractured their relationship. Rustin argued economics, not racism, was Black America's biggest problem. While some Black feminists viewed patriarchy, capitalism, white supremacy and heteronormativity as interlocking systems of oppression that could not be ranked, Rustin seemed intent on doing just that. By 1986 Black people were no longer the "barometer of social change", said Rustin in a speech. "The New 'Ni**ers' Are Gays."

Rustin's last years were happy, shared with Walter Naegle, a loving, devoted partner. Rustin was 65 and Naegle, 27.

"THE ONLY WAY I COULD BE A FREE WHOLE PERSON WAS TO FACE THE SHIT"

only a few words. Rustin toned down militancy. John Lewis' sanitised speech removed references to marching through the South like General Sherman in the Civil War. In King's iconic sermon "I Have A Dream", he preached to the world about America's bankrupt promises and police violence, he challenged the nation to "Let Freedom Ring". Dubbed Mr. March-On-Washington, Rustin stepped out of the shadows, acknowledged as the mastermind behind the march.

Though called a success, the march brought no immediate progress. The march reflected Rustin's philosophy that progress came through interracial coalitions and a shift from protest to politics. However on 15 September 1963, 16th St Baptist Church exploded in Birmingham, dynamited by the Klan, injuring 20 and killing four little girls. White supremacy still reigned legally across the land. In this light, Malcolm X declared the march was a "farce" offering an ultimatum: The Ballot or The Bullet.

Rustin's views, more so than his sexuality, caused him to fall out of favour. Rustin toured Watts, Los Angeles, with King, following riots there. It was a scene

He remained active, supporting refugees and advocating for Gay Rights - a need he understood first hand. Gay marriage was illegal, and without legal union it was difficult to handle estates or property, make health care decisions or have long-term relationships recognised. So, Rustin addressed this problem by making the surprising move of adopting Naegle, going through the legal process as though he were adopting a child, rather than formalising a romantic attachment.

Rustin died in 1987. Naegle received the Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama on his behalf in 2013, the same year marriage equality was established.

Bayard Rustin shows us that the people, the movements, many want to uphold as heroic, were often flawed and messy. Rustin's latter work stands as a rebuke of the very movements he sacrificed so much to create. Perhaps the price of the ticket, the cost he was asked to bear, was too great. The complexity of his life and work defies easy categorisation. Rustin is hard to fit in any box. As Rustin put it himself: "The only way I could be a free whole person was to face the shit." 🍌

made the goal clear: "to redress old grievances and help resolve an American crisis... born of the twin evils of racism and economic deprivation." The march introduced "a new concept of lobbying" - instead of taking their petition to the legislative halls, or marching to Capitol Hill or the White House, "we have invited every single Congressman and Senator to come to us - to hear our demands for jobs and freedom, NOW."

The day was historic. In the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial on 28 August

BELOW Rustin speaks to the press following the Harlem Riots in 1964







The First Fairy Tales



*Discover the origins of your
favourite magical folklore*

Written by Emily Staniforth

Cinderella; Snow White; Beauty And The Beast. Before Disney got their hands on these stories and turned them into animated film classics to be enjoyed by children around the world, they were some of the first stories to be written down and ascribed to the fairy tale genre of storytelling. Even before they were written down however, stories of mystical beasts, princesses locked in towers and wicked stepmothers were circulating in different parts of the world, and told by a variety of narrators in an oral tradition. Passed down through the generations, the stories were subject to embellishment and change as each culture, society and individual shaped and tailored the tales to their own preferences and circumstances. By the time these stories began to be written down, those that committed them to paper were merely collectors, rather than creators, of the tales and their extensive heritage.

With the term 'fairy tale' a 17th century invention, it is possible to trace the development of the fairy tale genre through the core elements that are fundamental to a story of this kind. In identifying tales from history that

feature components of magic, myth and morality, along with the entertaining inclusion of folkloric creatures (fairies, goblins, giants) and conversational animals, we can see how these fairy tales began, developed, and how they remain perpetually relevant and popular.



One Thousand and One Nights

Middle East and South Asia, c.600 CE

Often referred to in English as 'Arabian Nights', *One Thousand And One Nights* are plausibly the most well-known non-Western and non-European fairy tales. It is believed that the stories from this collection first appeared in the oral form in around 600 CE, and were conveyed by storytellers from Iran, Saudi Arabia and India. How and by whom the collection was compiled remains unknown, though it is believed that the tales made their way to the city of Baghdad through these storytellers during the rule of the Abbasid Dynasty in the Islamic Golden Age, where they gained popularity. It is possible that the collection was first recorded as a whole in Syria during the 13th century under the title *Alf laylah wa laylah* (One Thousand And One Nights). However, many versions of the stories were recorded by different nations in which they incorporated their own specific details into the stories.

Despite the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, the tales in *One Thousand And One Nights* survived and continued to circulate around the world. In the 18th century, French orientalist Antoine Galland translated the stories as a whole collection for the first time, and published the work as *Les Mille et Une Nuits* in the French language. Within this version of the Arabic tales, a selection of newer stories appeared, including the story of Aladdin and the magic lamp, and *Ali Baba And The Forty Thieves*. Until recently it was not known where these stories had originally come from, although research has now suggested that they were initially created by Hanna Diyab, a Syrian writer who met Galland in France.

In *One Thousand And One Nights*, King Shahryar commits to marrying and killing a new wife every day after his first wife was unfaithful to him. However, one young woman, Scheherazade, devises a plan to entertain the tyrannical king with a story every night. The king is so enthralled by Scheherazade's storytelling that he listens night after night until he eventually gives up on his evil plans. It is possible that this structure of tales within a tale influenced other writers like Basile and Geoffrey Chaucer. *One Thousand And One Nights* is also credited with introducing the concept of genies and ghouls, historically Arabic ideas, to a Western audience.



Giambattista Basile Italy, 1634

Credited as being the first collector of fairy tales as we recognise them today, Giambattista Basile was a writer from Naples, Italy who lived between c.1566 and 1632. A soldier and courtier, Basile turned his hand to writing after becoming enthralled by the folktales and literature from his hometown. Collecting a selection of stories, Basile recorded them in *Lo cunto de li cunti ovvero lo trattenemiento de' peccerille* (The Tale Of Tales Or Entertainment For Little Ones), also known as *Il Pentamerone*, weaving them into an overarching narrative. Basile's collection was heavily influenced by Neapolitan tradition and dialect.

In *The Tale Of Tales*, the cursed Princess Zoza organises a storytelling event over five days with ten women telling 50 stories. Among the stories recounted by Basile's characters are the original versions of some of the most beloved fairy tales. The European origins of stories such as *Cinderella*, *Beauty And The Beast*, *Rapunzel* and *Snow White* all appear, and serve as inspiration for later authors who turned Basile's tales into classics.

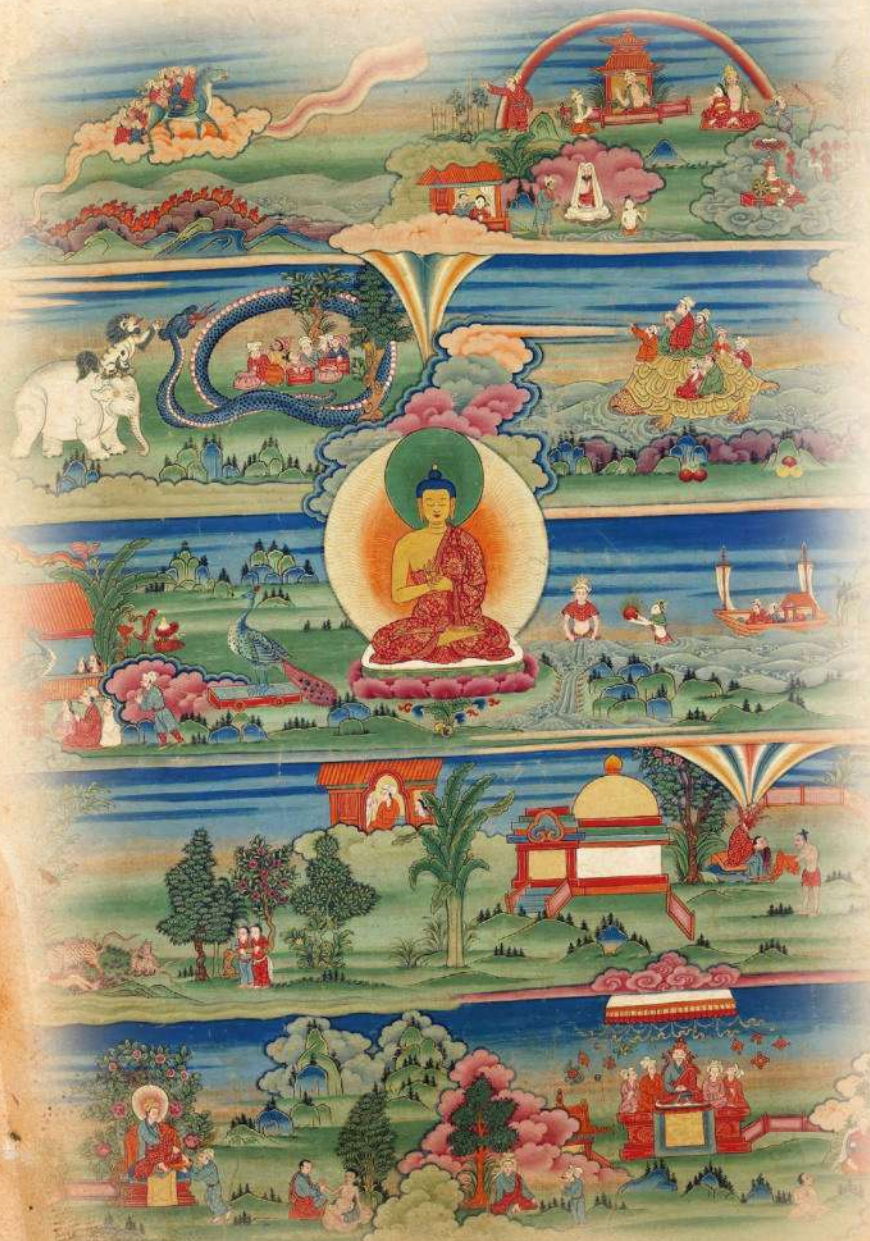
Basile sadly did not live to see the publication of *The Tale Of Tales*. His sister Adriana had the collection published in two volumes in 1634 and 1635 under a pseudonym. The fairy tales received little attention until the 19th century when the Brothers Grimm highlighted the tales as the "best and richest that had been found by any nation".



Jataka Tales India, c.6th century BCE

Part of the *Pali* canon of Buddhist sacred literature, the *Jataka Tales* are some of the oldest stories in the world that can be considered to have aspects of what would later become known as 'fairy tales'. Believed to have originally been told by the Buddha himself, the *Jataka Tales* recount the past lives of the Buddha and like many tales of this nature, it is believed that they were passed down orally until someone decided to commit them to paper. In these stories, the Buddha appears as a variety of different human figures as well as animals, and in each tale an ethical lesson can be taken from the events depicted. Like in other incarnations of fairy tales, such as *Aesop's Fables*, morality plays a central part in the *Jataka Tales*. There are even some themes that appear in *Aesop's Fables* (which originated around the same time period) that also appear in this Indian collection.

Numbering at around 550, the *Jataka Tales* collection is much larger than most of the folktale anthologies that came after. The stories aim to impart wisdom and virtue, and entertain through an array of interesting characters that range from monkeys to tree spirits to demonic beings. The *Jataka Tales* are held in extremely high regard by Buddhists around the world.

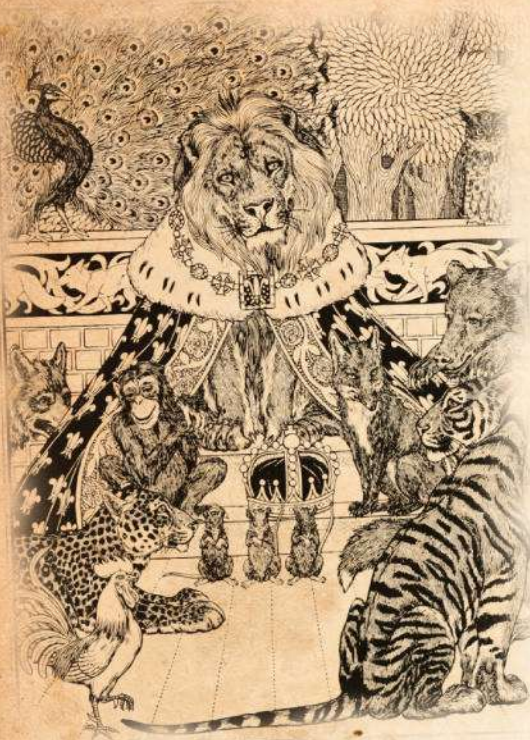


Pu Songling China, c.1679

While the stories written by Chinese author Pu Songling in the 17th century may not often be referred to as fairy tales, they certainly feature many of the elements that one would characterise as typical in this genre of writing. The mystical and supernatural were central themes in the 431 stories that made up Pu Songling's most famous work *Liaozhai zhiyi* (Strange Tales From A Chinese Studio). Unlike many folktales, Pu Songling's storytelling work did not originate in the oral tradition, and instead were written in manuscripts that were then circulated.

Pu Songling suffered in poverty for most of his life, and used the fantastical stories he created not only as a means of escape, but also, much like the Brothers Grimm, as a way to comment on societal issues that he felt strongly about. It took him 40 years to compile all the stories, and the full collection was not published until 1766, over 50 years after Pu Songling's death. Everyday life serves as the basis for most of the stories in *Liaozhai zhiyi* with magical aspects giving his work the fairy tale facet. Shapeshifters, spirits, haunted houses and curses that turn badly behaved humans into animals make these Chinese tales akin to the European fairy tales more familiar in the Western world. In China, Pu Songling's tales have served as the inspiration for many authors of romantic fiction, and are still regarded as "the pinnacle of classical Chinese fiction" according to Penguin.





Aesop's Fables Greece, 6th century BCE

One of the most famous collections of mystical stories from history, *Aesop's Fables* are often characterised as morality tales. Originally composed in the oral tradition in Ancient Greece and later written down and attributed to Aesop, the stories in Aesop's anthology mostly feature a variety of animal characters with human qualities that interact with each other to highlight the flaws and undesirable behaviours of mankind.

Historian Herodotus described the fables' author as a slave, but Plutarch stated that Aesop was an advisor to Croesus, the King of Lydia. However, while the name Aesop is attached to the collection of fables, some historians doubt whether Aesop ever actually existed, instead ascribing the tales to a larger group of individual unknown authors. It is possible that the name Aesop was invented in order to give stories of this kind a sense of cohesion. In the myth of Aesop, making him a slave suggests that these stories may have been invented and told by and among slaves. If this was the case, it is possible that slaves hid important messages in the fables that told real stories of their experiences as marginalised and oppressed members of society. Some of the most famous of *Aesop's Fables* that continue to be hugely popular today include *The Tortoise And The Hare*, and *The Goose That Laid The Golden Eggs*.

BROTHERS GRIMM Germany, 1812

Arguably the most famous authors and collectors of folktales in history, the Brothers Grimm have become synonymous with the fairy tale genre and are responsible for the worldwide popularity of many of the stories considered to be classics today. Born in Hanau, Germany in 1785 and 1786 respectively, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children And Household Tales) in several volumes from 1812. Comprised of over 200 tales, their dark and twisted collection often shocks modern readers who are familiar with the Disney-fied versions of many of the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales such as *Sleeping Beauty*, *Snow White* and *Rapunzel*.

Contrary to popular belief, the fairy tales collected by the Brothers Grimm were never intended to entertain children. Dedicated to recording folktales from across Northern European history, the brothers saw the tales as reflections of different beliefs and customs and as a way to preserve the cultures of the past. They also acted as a commentary on the harsh realities of life for many, with some of the stories in their first edition including *How Some Children Played At Slaughtering* and *The Children Of Famine*.

Sinister themes of violence and abuse are present throughout many of the Grimms' tales. For example, in their version of *Cinderella* the stepsisters cut their own toes off to fit into the slipper and ultimately end up having their eyes pecked out by doves. In *Snow White*, the hunter takes the seven-year-old protagonist into the forest to kill her and intends to return with her lungs and liver. In other lesser known tales such as *The Jew In The Brambles*, antisemitism plays a huge role in the brothers' portrayal of Jewish people. As a result, Nazis in the 20th century used the collection of fairy tales as part of their propaganda.

Despite all this, the Brothers Grimm are often credited with saving and preserving folktales that may otherwise have been lost to history. Their anthology became the second most popular book in Germanic speaking countries, next to the *Bible*.





Charles Perrault France, 1697

Parisian writer Charles Perrault is heralded as the man who created the fairy tale genre. For the majority of his career, Perrault worked in government service and as the secretary for the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, a society of scholars established in 1663. He also worked alongside King Louis XIV to help design the gardens of the Palace of Versailles. It is clear that Perrault was already inspired by folktales and mystical literature, as he suggested the inclusion of 39 fountains in Versailles' labyrinth that represented each of the fables in Aesop's famous anthology.

Perrault retired and dedicated his time to writing at the age of 55. Focusing mostly on poetry, Perrault did not start writing his collection of fairy tales until he was in his 60s, an endeavour he took on as a way to devote his time to his children. He took inspiration from the stories that had been told in the salons of 17th century France, committing them to paper and publishing *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé* (Tales And Stories Of The Past With Morals) in 1697. The book's subtitle was *Les Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (The Tales Of Mother Goose) and featured versions of folktales such as *Sleeping Beauty*, *Puss In Boots* and *Cinderella*, the latter of which he took inspiration for from Giambattista Basile's *Tale Of Tales*. Upon publication, Perrault's collection of fairy tales became hugely successful and popular. The occasion is considered as the birth of the fairy tale as we recognise it today.



Madame d'Aulnoy France, 1697

In the same year that Charles Perrault published his collection of folktales, a French baroness also produced her own selection of mystical stories to great acclaim. Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, more commonly known as Madame d'Aulnoy, had been a published author for years before she published her *Les Contes Des Fées* (Tales Of Fairies), in which she coined the term "fairy tale" for the first time. At the time of Madame d'Aulnoy's writing, magical tales were becoming popular narratives within the salons of Paris. It is believed that the conversational style in which Madame d'Aulnoy wrote her fairy tales was heavily influenced by the oral storytelling in Paris' salons.

Many of the stories written by Madame d'Aulnoy are not as recognisable as those written by others like her, possibly because she was influenced by the tales she heard but then added her own spin to them in order to comment on political and societal matters. Her work was also shaped by her personal experience, with the story of *The Blue Bird* written as a critique of the practice of forced marriages, of which she herself had been a victim. As a female voice in the development of the fairy tale genre, Madame d'Aulnoy's is not one that should be ignored.



A lavish illustration of a scene from one of the trials, the Claimant can be seen at the centre while Kenealy is depicted on the right





THE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT

Who was the mysterious man
who claimed to be the long-lost
heir to one of Britain's oldest
aristocratic families?

Written by Callum McKelvie



From Alexandre Dumas's 1850 adventure *The Man In The Iron Mask* to Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr Ripley*, tales of imposters and devious doubles have thrilled us for centuries.

But sometimes fact is far stranger than fiction. In the mid-19th century, Victorian Britain was shaken to its core when Roger Tichborne, the heir to the aristocratic Tichborne family, returned to his ancestral home, 13 years after disappearing without a trace. When he attempted to claim the Tichborne inheritance, a bitter legal battle began that divided Victorian society. The Tichborne Claimant might appear to be another tale of a devious con artist, but the story of this real-life Mr Ripley is far more complex than it might first seem. Was he the long-lost Roger as he claimed? Or was he the manipulative Arthur Orton, out to swindle Britain's ruling class?

By the 19th century the Tichbornes had established themselves as privileged members of Britain's ruling elite. An old and prestigious family, they had held Tichborne manor in Hampshire since at least the 12th century and were also said to be extremely wealthy, owning lands worth somewhere in the region of £25,000, an astronomical figure at the time. The ▶



Compared to the relatively diminutive Sir Roger, the Claimant was a large man - a factor that featured much within the trial



heir to this vast fortune was Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne, the eldest son of Sir James Tichborne and Lady Tichborne, Harriette Felicité. Born in Paris in 1829, he spent much of his young life in the army, serving as a lieutenant in the Sixth Dragoon Guards.

However, in 1852 Roger declared his love for his cousin Catherine and her parents, shocked at this revelation, forbade any marriage. Heartbroken, the 23-year-old left the armed forces and resolved to travel, departing first for France and then for a tour of South America. The last positive sighting of the young Roger was on 20 April 1854, when he was known to have boarded the *Bella*, a passenger ship sailing from Rio de Janeiro to Jamaica. However, disaster soon struck when the *Bella* was lost at sea. The discovery a few days later of wreckage confirmed the fears that both the ship and her crew had gone to Davy Jones' locker. But, not a single body could be found among the debris and so despite signs to the contrary, the bereaved continued to hope against hope that perhaps there were survivors.

One of the bereaved, Lady Tichborne, was so desperate for answers as to whether her son had survived the ship's sinking, that she chose to consult a clairvoyant. At the meeting the clairvoyant gave Lady Tichborne the news she had been hoping for - her son was alive and well, lost somewhere in the world. Now utterly convinced that Roger was not dead, the poor bereaved woman embarked upon a desperate search for her missing child. Historian Carrie Dawson states that as part of her hunt Lady Tichborne "contacted a missing persons agency and ran international advertisements, promising a reward for information concerning his whereabouts."

In 1866, Lady Tichborne received the response she had been waiting for when a man wrote to her claiming to be Roger. The man stated he had been working as a butcher in Wagga Wagga, Australia, living under the name Thomas Castro. Agreeing to meet at the Hotel De Lille in Paris, the gentleman who arrived was noticeably different to the son she had known. To begin with he was almost twice Roger's size and his speech was a great deal less refined, spoken with a thick cockney accent. Additionally there were curious lapses of memory and he was unable to recall any French despite the fact that she herself had raised Roger in Paris.

But shockingly, despite these painfully obvious discrepancies, Lady Tichborne immediately recognised the man as her son. As was noted in William J Kinsley's 1911 article examining the case: "One of the strangest occurrences in this or any other identity case was that Lady Tichborne recognised this coarse, rough, ignorant burly man of 250 to 300 pounds as the rather undersized



ABOVE William Ballantine, lawyer for the Claimant at the Tichborne V. Lushington trial



ABOVE The Claimant's defence lawyer during the second trial, Edward Kenealy

THE TICHBORNE DOLE

The affair of the Claimant is not the only mysterious part of the Tichborne family's past, and an ancient curse has ramifications that are still felt today

The story goes that, one spring day sometime in the 13th century, Lady Mabella Tichborne lay dying. In her final moments, she begged her husband Sir Roger to promise that he would donate food to the poor villages each year following her death. But Sir Roger was a cruel man and he made a despicable arrangement with his dying wife. He promised he would donate flour, but only from the amount of farmland that Lady Tichborne was able to crawl around before the blazing torch she was forced to carry went out.

However, Lady Tichborne succeeded in traversing an entire 23-acre field and cursed her husband. Should any generation of Tichbornes fail in donating the yearly amount of food, or Dole, she prophesied a generation of seven daughters would be born and the family name would soon die out. When the Dole was suspended in 1796, part of the house collapsed in 1803, before the prophesied seven daughters were born to Sir Henry Tichborne who took the baronetcy in 1821. The Dole was reinstated shortly afterwards and continues to this day with a yearly ceremony.



young man whom 13 years before she had parted when he was 24 years of age".

So who was this mysterious pretender? While some still debate his identity, many believe that the man who walked into the Hotel De Lille that cold day in January was not Roger Tichborne at all, nor Thomas Castro but was in fact Arthur Orton. Little is known about Orton's early life, except for a few hints of heavy drinking and a handful of minor legal offences. Orton is also known to have lived for a brief period in Chile, which The State Library of New South Wales explains may have been instrumental in his ability to converse with Lady Tichborne about South America.

At the time of his responding to Lady Tichborne's advertisement, Orton was indeed working as a butcher in Wagga Wagga under the Castro name but was in fact British by birth. Indeed, Orton's first move when arriving in Britain was to contact relatives in East Wapping, a decision that would later return to haunt him when he faced the courts. Nevertheless, Lady Tichborne seemed convinced that this butcher from Wagga Wagga was indeed her son. And so for two years the pair lived happily, 'Roger' even bringing his wife and child over from Australia and receiving a generous allowance of £1,000 per year from his 'mother'.

But two years later on 12 March 1868, at the age of 59, Lady Tichborne passed away. Since Roger's reappearance, the wider Tichborne family, along with a slew of friends and acquaintances,

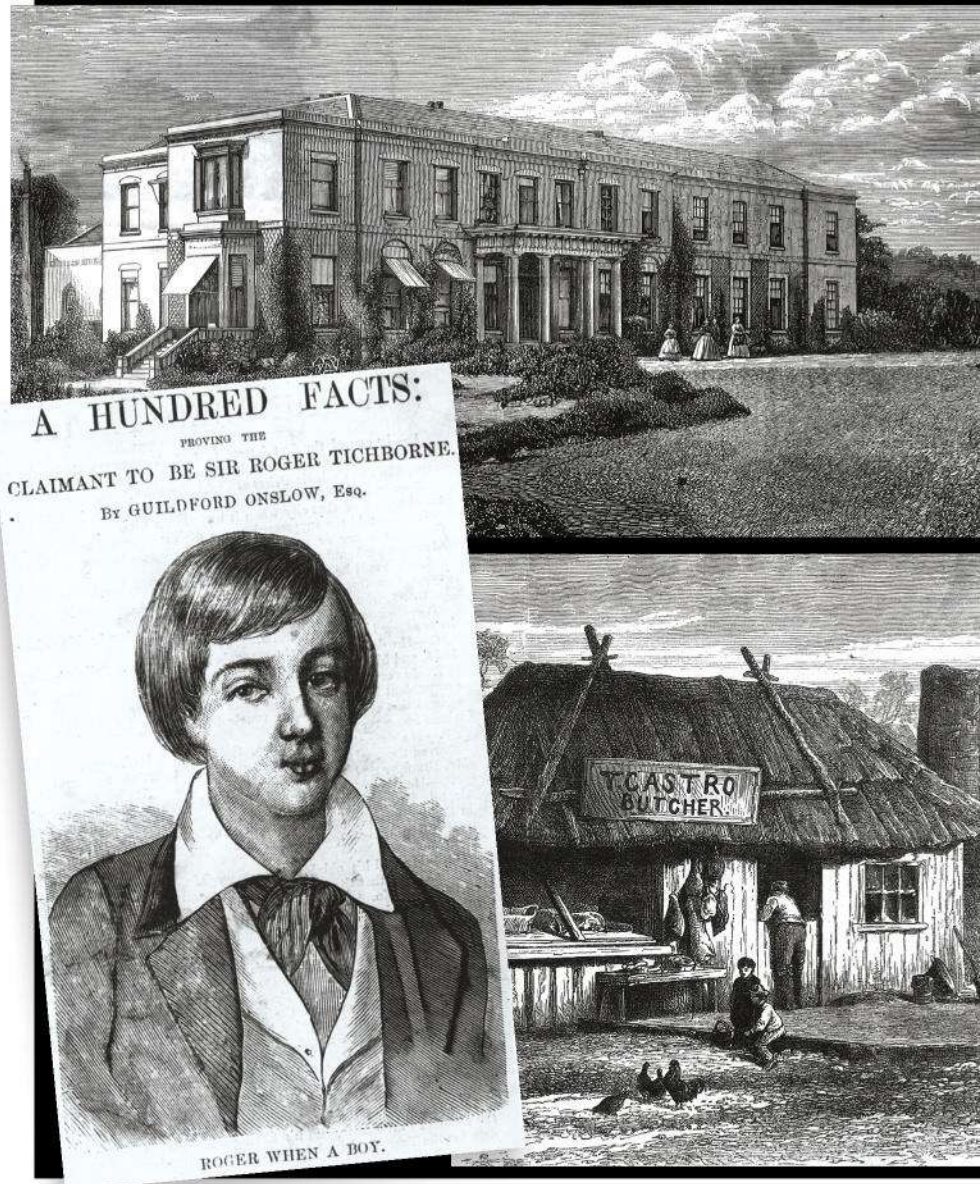
"LADY TICHBORNE SEEMED CONVINCED THAT THIS BUTCHER FROM WAGGA WAGGA WAS HER SON"

had been suspicious as to the man's real identity. However following Lady Tichborne's death, the Claimant (who had become increasingly used to a lavish lifestyle and had acquired significant debts) was convinced to lay claim to the vast Tichborne estate and fortune. When the family objected, the Claimant chose to attempt to prove once and for all that he was Roger Tichborne in the British courts.

On 11 May 1871, 'Tichborne V. Lushington' began. With the assistance of noted lawyer Serjeant William Ballantine (one of the last individuals to hold the title of Serjeant-at-law before it was abolished in the judicial reforms of 1873) the Claimant hoped to eject the current tenant, Colonel Lushington from the Tichborne estate. According to Carrie Dawson in her article on the Tichborne affair for *Who's Who? Hoaxes, Imposture And Identity Crises In Australian Literature*, the case was complicated with the Claimant able to: "Recall the layout of family homes, the punch lines of family jokes, and other details to which family members had unique access."

Yet the family's lawyers also presented a series of convincing arguments. The Claimants' visit to the Orton family was recalled, and the lawyers began to question the Claimant as to whether he was in fact Arthur Orton. The Claimant's cockney accent, they stated, as well as his lack of knowledge of the correct pronunciation of the Queen's English and his marriage to a woman of lower class, all demonstrated him to be a fraud. As their representative, Attorney General John Coleridge, was said to have noted, "A man may forget certain things. Can a man forget being a gentleman?"

But one particular piece of evidence, which proved to be instrumental in the jury's decision, involved a tattoo that Roger Tichborne was said to have had on his arm which the Claimant



TOP Tichborne House, the ancestral home of the Tichborne family

ABOVE-LEFT The trials caused a public sensation and numerous pamphlets were produced - such as this one with a portrait of Sir Roger as a young boy. Were he and the Claimant the same man?

ABOVE-RIGHT An illustration of the Claimant's butcher shop in Wagga Wagga. The Claimant went by the name of Thomas Castro, though it is suspected he was Arthur Orton

lacked. However some historians, such as Christopher A Kent in his reappraisal of the Tichborne case, have questioned the validity of the tattoo as evidence. As Kent states in his essay: "Their recollection of the tattoo came suspiciously late in the proceedings and smacks of collusion."

Away from the courtroom, the Tichborne case had become a public sensation. This was helped no doubt by the media's exploitation of the case's various salacious elements, which even included a purported "malfornation of the genitals." A number of enterprising individuals also sought to capitalise on the public's interest in the case. For example, Brighton Museum on England's South Coast contains a number of examples of 'souvenir' clay figures, including models of the young Sir Roger and the mysterious Claimant.

The Tichborne family had only called 17 witnesses and were prepared to call more when on 4 March the jury decided the debacle could continue no longer. After 103 days in court, the jury prepared to rule in the family's favour, when the Claimant withdrew the case and was nonsuited. But the damage was already done and the Claimant was arrested on suspicion of perjury and forgery. He was taken to Newgate Prison to await a criminal trial. Now the Claimant would have to prove once and for all that he was indeed Roger Tichborne. If he did not, then he would surely face time behind bars.

In the interim between the civil and criminal case, the Claimant's legal team sought to use the publicity surrounding the trials to their advantage. Previously, they had issued 'Tichborne



“KENEALY ARGUED THAT THE CASE WAS PART OF A CONSPIRACY TO PROTECT UPPER-CLASS INTERESTS”

Bonds' (which could be redeemed once Roger was victorious) to help fund their legal fees. Now, individuals could also donate to the Tichborne defence fund, which raised £60,000. Those who supported 'Roger' saw him as a hero, as someone who due to his working-class mannerisms and background was the victim of an elite conspiracy. The Claimant made sure to cultivate this image of himself, giving a number of public speeches before the trial.

The Claimant's defence lawyer during the trial for perjury was Dr Edward Vaughan Kenealy, described by Christopher A Kent as “a voluminous but largely unread poet rather than a legal novelist.” Kenealy used the working-class support for the Claimant to his advantage and argued that the case was thus part of a larger conspiracy to protect the interests of the upper class elites. He was said to hurl insults at witnesses, the presiding judge and even holy institutions of the Catholic Church.

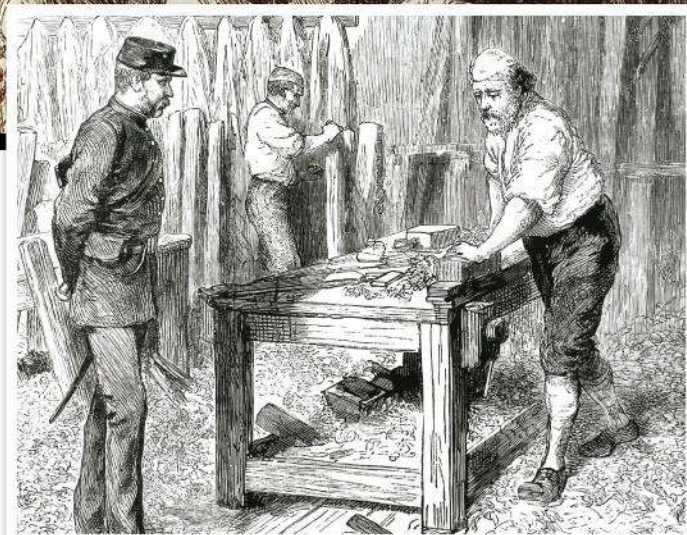
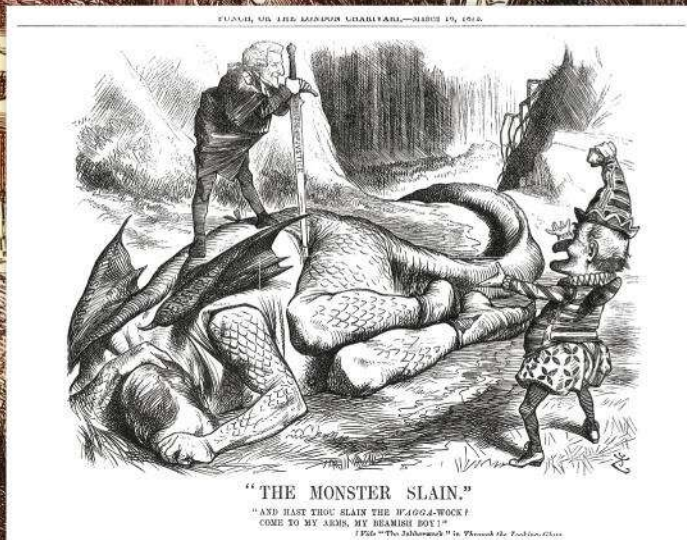
At one point Kenealy called a crucial witness, Jean Luie, to testify that he had been aboard the *Osprey* - a ship that had purportedly rescued survivors from the *Bella*. However, it soon became apparent that not only had Jean Luie never been aboard such a ship, but he himself was an imposter and was later sentenced to seven years behind bars. After a turbulent 188 days in court, the jury were now convinced that the Claimant was indeed Arthur Orton. The Claimant was found guilty of perjury and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment.

Following the trial, Kenealy's unprofessional behaviour in court saw him disbarred and forbidden from practising law, but he was not prepared to let the story end here. Throughout the trial he had witnessed the swelling working-class sentiment in favour of the Claimant and was inspired to form the Magna Charta Association. This organisation has been

ABOVE The controversial legal battles split public opinion in England

ABOVE-INSET A cartoon from *Punch* magazine celebrating the Claimant's defeat in the first court case

RIGHT A depiction of the Claimant at work at Portsmouth Convict Prison



described by Alexander Lock as promoting a “broad reformist agenda”, drawing inspiration from the earlier Chartists movement of the 1830s and 1840s. Despite his behaviour in court, Kenealy remained popular and in 1875 was elected to represent Stoke-on-Trent in Parliament.

However there were a few final twists in the tale. In 1895, *The People* published what it stated was a confession by Arthur Orton that the Claimant then recanted almost immediately. When the Claimant died in poverty a few years later on 1 April 1898, thousands attended the funeral. Buried in a pauper's grave, at the last moment the Tichborne family granted permission for a card bearing the name 'Sir Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne', to be placed on the coffin. Were they finally admitting that this was in fact the long-lost Sir Roger? Or was it perhaps a cruel April Fools' Day prank? A joke at the expense of the dead man who had spent the majority of his life living as someone else?

Largely forgotten today, the tale of the Tichborne Claimant enthralled the Victorian public. Whether or not the Claimant was indeed Sir Roger Tichborne was a question for popular debate, and was argued about in public houses and railway cars across the country. In the centuries since the Claimant's death, it has become a largely accepted fact that he was Arthur Orton. But the lingering uncertainty surrounding his identity means that no one can say for sure who was buried after that April Fools' Day in 1898. ○



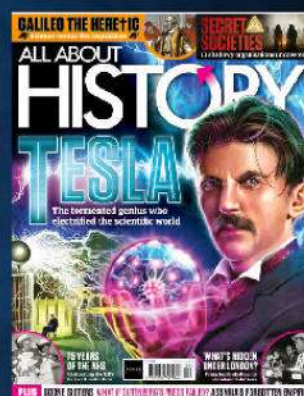
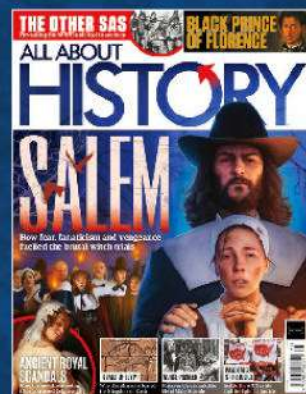
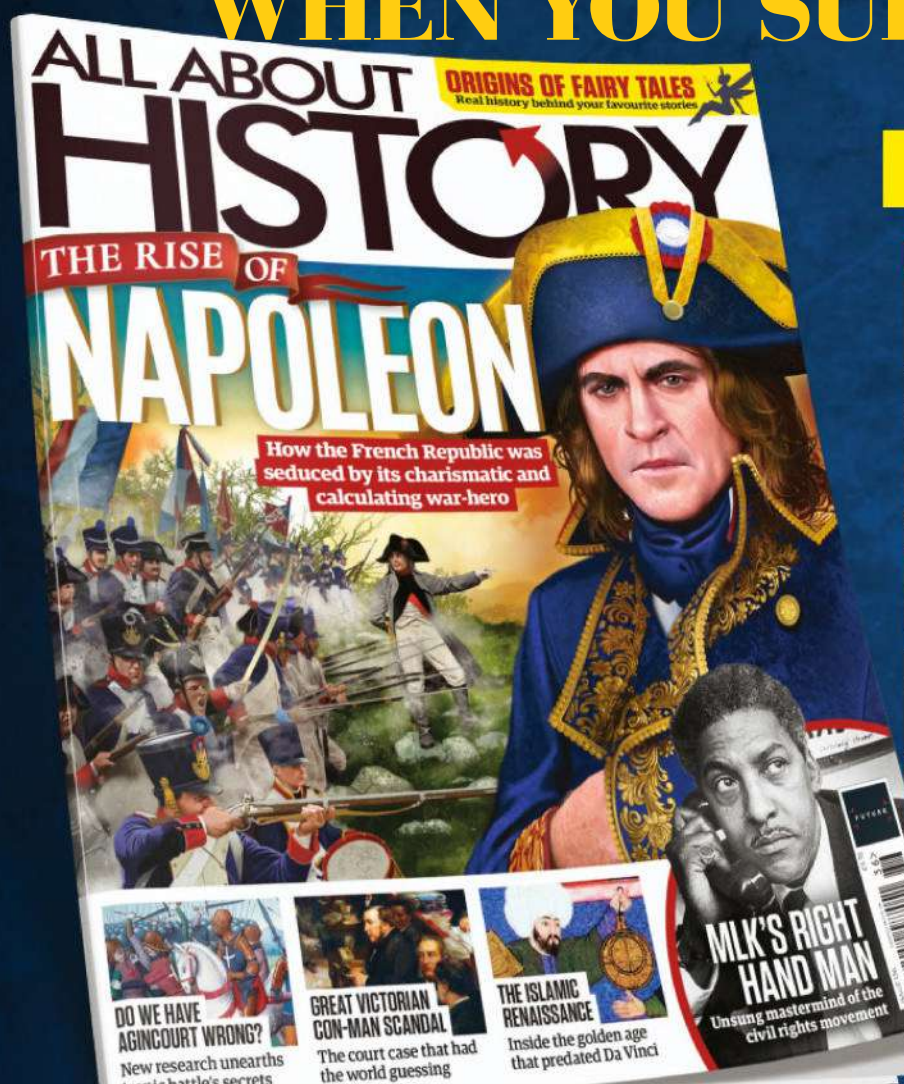
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Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF CAPORETTO

NORTHEAST ITALY/WESTERN SLOVENIA, 24 OCT – 10 NOV 1917

Written by Nick Solding

At 2am on 24 October 1917, Austro-German forces unleashed a devastating artillery attack against Italian troops defending land they'd captured in a long series of brutal and costly offensives. It was the opening salvo in a battle that would lead to one of the greatest military catastrophes of World War I.

After two and a half years of a vicious war fought in a dramatic, often frozen landscape thousands of feet up in the clouds, the Italian defences were well built. Earthworks and underground bunkers had been dynamited and drilled into the region's mountainous terrain, while an elaborate trench system stretched across the valley floors below. Although these had proven resilient in the face of previous artillery attacks, they did little to protect the Italian troops from the horror that now rained



A soldier surveys the bloody aftermath of fighting along a road in the Julian Alps

down upon them. Approximately 10 per cent of the shells fired that morning contained phosgene gas. Although the use of chemical weapons was commonplace on the Western Front, poison gas had never been used before in the so-called White War that raged in the Alps. The Italian high command had completely underestimated the power of this new terror weapon and its troops were ill-equipped to deal with it. The results were devastating.

At 8am, the Austro-German infantry assault began. As it advanced in a pincer movement to seize the river crossing at Caporetto, it encountered little resistance from what had been a numerically superior force. The gas attack had been so effective that hundreds of Italian troops now lay dead in their defences without having fired a shot. Thousands more, meanwhile, were fleeing the

battlefield and heading west. What unfolded next would have disastrous consequences for Italy, creating social and political upheaval for years to come. And, although Italy's troops would be accused of cowardice, responsibility for the disaster was largely due to the shortcomings of one man.

THE WHITE WAR

By the time World War I broke out on 28 July 1914, Italy's chief of staff General Luigi Cadorna was a career staff officer on the brink of retirement. A strict disciplinarian from an aristocratic background, he was privileged and autocratic, with a reputation for arrogance and a history of mistreating his men.

Italy had been part of the Triple Alliance, a defensive pact it had formed with Imperial

Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1882. Rather than side with its allies at the outbreak of war, however, the country's political leadership kept Italy out of the conflict until they'd weighed up the odds.

By the spring of 1915, they'd picked a side and on 26 April signed a secret agreement known as the Treaty of London. During a clandestine meeting, Italy's prime minister Antonio Salandra pledged support to Britain, France and Russia in exchange for promises of land. The Triple Alliance was now in tatters and Italy's fate had been sealed.

On 23 May, Italy declared war on its former allies, and its armies under General Cadorna's command invaded Austro-Hungarian territory to the north and northeast. As a younger man, Cadorna had written a manual on infantry tactics that stressed

the need for offensive decisiveness. He now threw his ill-prepared army into a series of large-scale assaults against Austro-Hungarian defences strung across the Alps. By the autumn of 1917, however, Cadorna's great offensive campaign had advanced no more than 16km (10 miles) into Austro-Hungarian territory.

The price his troops had paid for this hubris had been exorbitant. Around 250,000 men had been killed and a further 750,000 were wounded in the fighting. This horrific casualty rate was down to several factors. Despite outnumbering the Austro-Hungarian forces by around three-to-one, the Italian troops lacked sufficient artillery, equipment, supplies and training.

These inadequacies had a corrosive effect on morale and were exacerbated by Cadorna's style of leadership. He refused to review his tactics and blamed everyone but himself for the failures. He dismissed or demoted over 800 senior officers whom he felt showed a lack of "offensive spirit", while 750 enlisted men under his command were executed by firing squad, the highest number of any army in the war.

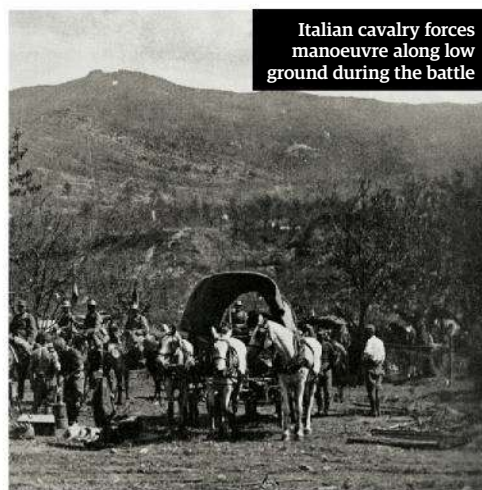
If all this wasn't bad enough, the conditions General Cadorna's men had to fight in were among the most brutal of the war. With Austro-Hungarian forces occupying a chain of high-altitude fortifications, the Italians literally found themselves fighting an uphill battle. A typical assault would see them scrambling under fire up impossibly steep slopes on rocky terrain that offered little cover while amplifying the lethal effect of artillery as it shattered and splintered. As well as bullets and bombs, both sides also had to contend with hypothermia and frostbite. Avalanches were common, with an estimated 10,000 troops from both sides losing their lives to them in a single day on 13 December 1915.

STALEMATE IN THE ALPS

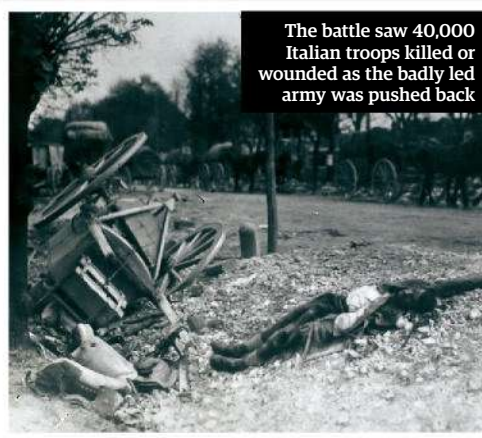
Since the opening days of the campaign, Cadorna had deployed his forces on two fronts, one facing north towards Trentino and the other towards Trieste in the east. It was the second of these, the one that ran along the fast-flowing Isonzo River, that witnessed the worst of the fighting and would become synonymous with Italy's sacrifice.

Between June 1915 and August 1917, Cadorna launched a series of major assaults there for little gain. The final one, the so-called 11th Battle of the Isonzo, was so brutal it left both sides exhausted. In fact, Cadorna's force was so weakened it was no longer capable of carrying out the offensive operations, for which he'd stubbornly insisted his men die. Reluctantly, he now ordered his troops to defend to the last man the territory they'd captured, particularly the high ground.

The Austro-Hungarian Army, meanwhile, was now so depleted that its commanders feared it would finally break in the face of another attack. The concern was so great that an appeal for help was thus made directly to Germany's kaiser



Italian cavalry forces manoeuvre along low ground during the battle



The battle saw 40,000 Italian troops killed or wounded as the badly led army was pushed back

Wilhelm II. Up until now, the Germans had considered the Italian Front a sideshow, but things were starting to change.

By the autumn of 1917, Russia was in turmoil. Imperial Russia was being consigned to history and as it disintegrated, so did the war on the Eastern Front. And with no real enemy left to fight, the Austro-German forces stationed there were earmarked for redeployment to the Western Front. The kaiser, however, sensing an opportunity, chose to send seven divisions under the command of General Otto von Below south to join the fight against the Italians.

Among the troops under his command were several specialist alpine units. He also had soldiers who were schooled in a new type of combat that had been specifically developed to overcome the stalemate of trench warfare. Known as Hutier tactics, after an officer who had pioneered their development, it used intense artillery barrages to neutralise an enemy line so that it could be infiltrated and overcome by fast-moving shock troops known as stormtroopers.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

On 24 October these tactics were put into action for the first time against the Italians around the town of Caporetto (now Kobarid in modern-day Slovenia). The front line sat approximately 11km (seven miles) east of the river and General von Below had

identified the defences there as the weakest point in the Italian line.

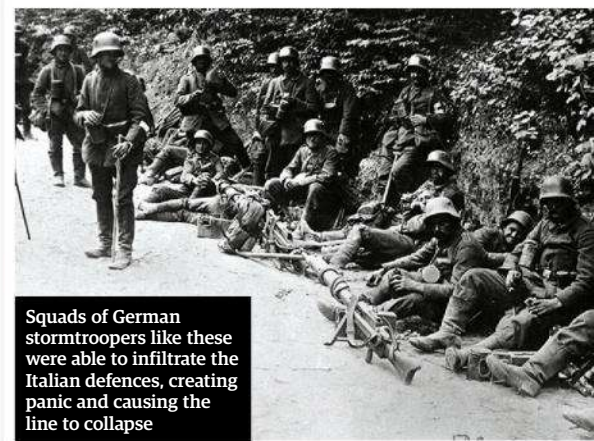
The offensive began at 2am with an intense artillery and gas bombardment. Designed to cut lines of communication and create chaos in the Italian ranks, it was even more effective than von Below could have hoped for. By the time it lifted at 8am and he sent in his stormtroopers, their advance was largely uncontested.

The weather helped. That morning a cold, thick fog had enveloped the area and visibility was poor, allowing the small agile groups of shock troops to slip through the Italian lines often unnoticed. The first those still defending their positions knew of the stormtroopers' presence was when they attacked from behind. Believing themselves to be surrounded, large groups of Italian troops now began surrendering to these infiltrating units and the line began to dissolve.

Cadorna's order to hold the mountains at all costs now saw his soldiers on the higher ground cut off as Austro-German forces swept through the valleys below. In just one morning, von Below had broken the Italian line with a classic pincer movement as his troops swept down from the Bovec Basin in the north and up from Tolmin in the south. The speed of the attack soon created panic among the Italian troops and they began to abandon their positions en masse.

By the end of the day, von Below's troops had advanced around 23km (14 miles), seizing many key bridges along the way. In doing so, they had thrown the Italian Army into disarray. Thousands of its troops had been killed or injured while as many as 20,000 had been taken prisoner.

On 25 October, von Below sent in his alpine troops to clear the Italian strongholds in the mountains. Among the units that successfully completed this mission was the Royal Württemberg Mountain Battalion, which included a young company commander by the name of Lieutenant Erwin Rommel. Rommel, of course, would go on to greater fame as the Desert Fox in World War II, but it was in the frozen mountains around Caporetto that he first made a name for himself. Over the next two and a half days he and his 150 men captured 9,000 Italians, including 150 officers. His exploits



Squads of German stormtroopers like these were able to infiltrate the Italian defences, creating panic and causing the line to collapse

would earn him the Order of Merit, Prussia's highest military honour, and make him a household name.

THE FRONT COLLAPSES

Unsurprisingly, Cadorna hadn't planned for the possibility of a retreat. Neither had he built an effective reserve to reinforce his line, and within two days the Italians were in full flight across the entire front. Not that Cadorna was about to accept responsibility for what was unfolding. Instead, he issued an official communication that put the blame squarely on the men under his command.

Cadorna's attempt to control the narrative backfired on him almost immediately.

By 30 October the Italians had been chased back to the eastern banks of the Tagliamento River and Cadorna had little choice but to order his men to retreat to the far side. Under constant attack from von Below's troops, it took the Italians four arduous days to complete the operation.

Having now advanced more than 80km (50 miles) in just over a week, the Austro-German supply line was at breaking point. Finally freed from fighting a relentless rearguard action, what remained of the Italian force now regrouped and retreated a further 64km (40 miles) south to establish a new defensive line along the Piavé River.

Despite ongoing supply problems, von Below ordered his troops to go after them and on 10 November offensive operations were resumed. It was a high-risk strategy but the German general had no choice. He was running out of time.

The US had entered the war in April 1917 and by the autumn the first of its troops were landing in France. Hundreds of thousands more would soon follow them across the Atlantic. If Italy could be knocked out of the war before they arrived, the Austro-German armies in the south could be sent to the Western Front.

France and Britain were well aware of the danger, and they rushed 11 infantry divisions south by train to reinforce and resupply the Italians. They arrived just as von Below was launching a series of partially successful attacks. The new defensive line held, however, and the Italian Front once again settled into a stalemate and would remain static until the final weeks of the war.



After the front collapsed, Italian troops retreated around 130km (80 miles) back into Italy pursued by Austro-German forces

KINGDOM OF ITALY



LUIGI CADORNA

Chief of staff to the Italian Army from 1914 to 1917, Caporetto would precede the end of his tenure in the role. He was about to retire before Italy entered the war in 1915. He became Italy's representative to the Allied War Council from 1917. Despite being blamed for the defeat he was made field marshal in 1924 after Benito Mussolini's fascists came to power.



LUIGI CAPELLO

Serving in the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-12 and WWI, Capello was a commander of a number of army corps during his senior career. He was relieved of command following Caporetto. Post-war he became a member of the National Fascist Party, but was expelled in 1923 and later involved in a plot to assassinate Mussolini, for which he served nine years of a 30-year jail sentence.

CENTRAL POWERS



OTTO VON BELOW

Von Below started his WWI campaign fighting in the east, earning him a promotion to command the 8th Army. He went on to lead troops in Macedonia, in France and then Italy. Following victory there he went to the Western Front until Germany's surrender. He retired in 1919, and the Allies attempted to have him tried for war crimes, which didn't come to pass.



SVETOZAR BOROEVIC

Born in what is now Croatia, Boroević was known as the 'Lion of Isonzo' due to his leadership on the Isonzo Front during WWI. He was seemingly well-liked by his men who called him 'Our Sveto', and due to his exploits won promotion to Generaloberst prior to Caporetto. Later he became field marshal and received a number of military awards. He died in 1920.



ARTHUR ARZ VON STRAUSSBURG

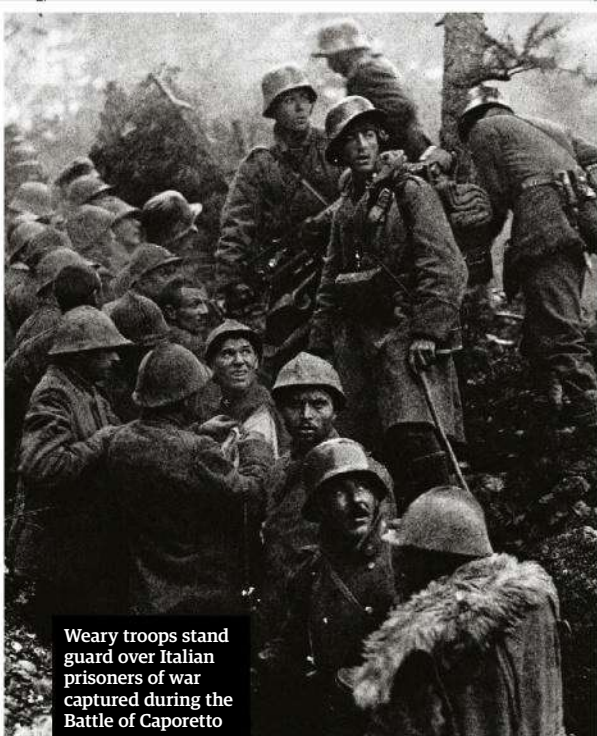
The last chief of the general staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army, Arz started the war as commander of the 15th Infantry and then head of the 6th Corps and First Army. His success and direct advice to the emperor saw him raised into the nobility in 1918. As the war turned he offered his resignation, but was kept in his post until the armistice was being negotiated.

THE COST OF DEFEAT

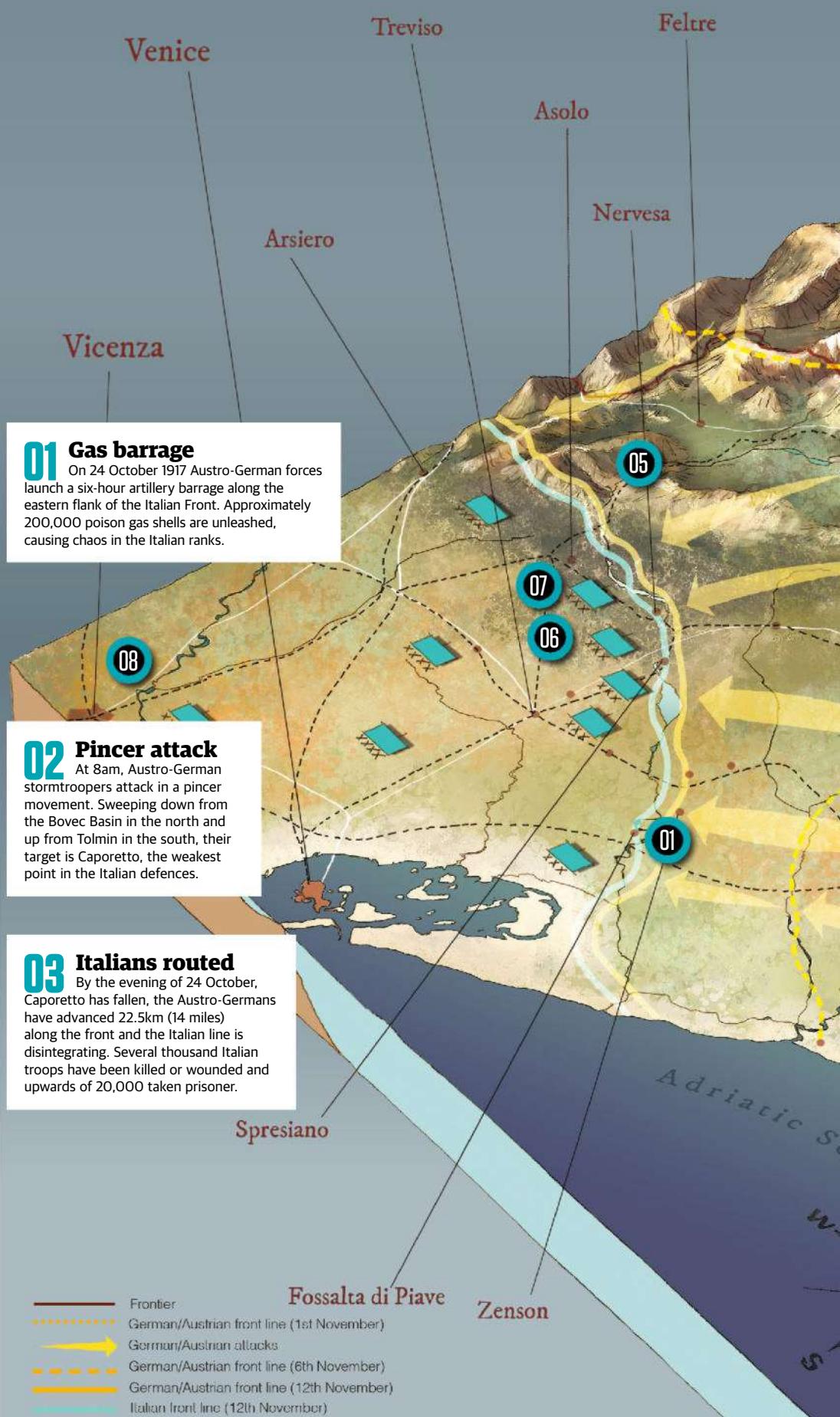
Although fighting in the sector would continue well into the next year, the Battle of Caporetto officially ended on 10 November. By then, Austro-German casualties stood at around 50,000 killed or wounded while Italian losses were even worse. As well as suffering 40,000 killed or wounded, 300,000 Italian troops had been taken prisoner. A further 300,000 had become displaced and were largely unaccounted for, while a further 50,000 had officially deserted. Thousands of tonnes of materiel had also been captured, including over 3,000 artillery pieces and a similar number of machine guns which the poorly equipped Italian Army could ill afford to lose. The cost to the civilian population, meanwhile, had been devastating, with up to 1,000,000 refugees forced to flee the fighting as over 5,000 square miles (13,000 square km) of Italian territory had fallen into enemy hands.

The catastrophe of Caporetto was more than just a military defeat for Italy. Its humiliation inflicted a trauma on the national psyche that was to have far-reaching consequences. Even as the battle raged, Italy's prime minister Paolo Boselli had been forced from office. He was replaced by Vittorio Orlando, whose first act was to get rid of Cadorna and replace him with the more effective General Armando Diaz. But this change in Italy's leadership would not be enough to stop the schism now opening up in Italian society.

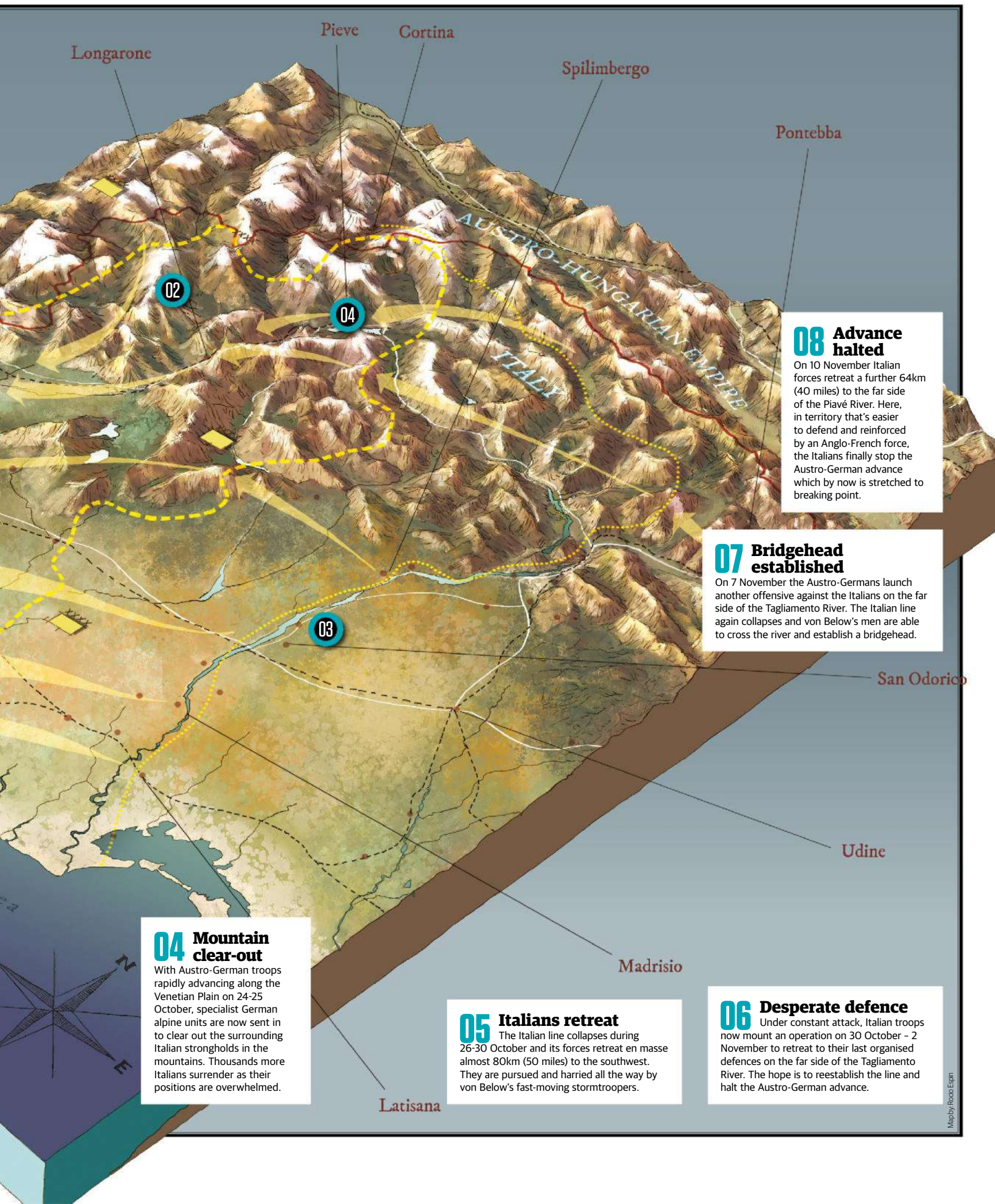
In the economic turmoil of the immediate post-war years, different factions sought to blame one another for the humiliation, and the ignominy of Caporetto tore Italian society apart. In doing so, it paved the way for Benito Mussolini, who exploited the tragedy and sense of national shame it invoked to fulfil his political ambitions.



Weary troops stand guard over Italian prisoners of war captured during the Battle of Caporetto



Battle of Caporetto



02

04

03

08 Advance halted

On 10 November Italian forces retreat a further 64km (40 miles) to the far side of the Piave River. Here, in territory that's easier to defend and reinforced by an Anglo-French force, the Italians finally stop the Austro-German advance which by now is stretched to breaking point.

07 Bridgehead established

On 7 November the Austro-Germans launch another offensive against the Italians on the far side of the Tagliamento River. The Italian line again collapses and von Below's men are able to cross the river and establish a bridgehead.

04 Mountain clear-out

With Austro-German troops rapidly advancing along the Venetian Plain on 24-25 October, specialist German alpine units are now sent in to clear out the surrounding Italian strongholds in the mountains. Thousands more Italians surrender as their positions are overwhelmed.

05 Italians retreat

The Italian line collapses during 26-30 October and its forces retreat en masse almost 80km (50 miles) to the southwest. They are pursued and harried all the way by von Below's fast-moving stormtroopers.

06 Desperate defence

Under constant attack, Italian troops now mount an operation on 30 October - 2 November to retreat to their last organised defences on the far side of the Tagliamento River. The hope is to reestablish the line and halt the Austro-German advance.

What If...

THE ASSASSINATION OF RASPUTIN HAD FAILED?

Could the survival of "Russia's greatest love machine" have altered the course of World War I?

Interview by Callum McKelvie

INTERVIEW WITH



CORYNE HALL

Coryne Hall is a historian and specialist in Romanov history. She is the author of a number of books on this subject including *Queen Victoria And The Romanovs* (2020) and *To Free The Romanovs* (2018).

Grigori Rasputin was a mystic who entered the Russian court when he claimed to heal the Tsar's young son. However, in 1916 he met his end at the hands of assassins. Rasputin's bizarre death only served to further the impression of him as an almost supernatural entity. In the years since his demise he has been the subject of numerous films, books and other popular media - even appearing as a villain in the recent *Kingsman* series of spy-comedies. But what if he had not died that fateful night in July? What if the assassins had failed? Would his survival have been unimportant, leading only to his death at the hands of the Bolsheviks in 1917? Or could he have helped alter the course of World War I?

Who was Grigori Rasputin and what was his role in the court?

Grigori Rasputin was a purported Siberian holy man, who invaded his way into the court of Nicholas II because Empress Alexandra believed that he could cure her son of haemophilia. Quite how he did this we don't know, but he was somehow able to calm the young Alexei down during his bleeding episodes and the bleeding stopped, which in turn calmed Alexandra.

Because of his calming influence over both Alexei and Alexandra, he had access to the court and began to have influence in high places, for example suggesting the appointment of ministers. After the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the following year Nicholas went to command

the front. Alexandra was left in charge and Rasputin began interfering in the government, suggesting ideas about food supplies, troops and battles. When things started going badly, people started remembering Alexandra's German birth and became concerned.

Tell us a little about one of the chief conspirators in the assassination plot, Prince Felix Yusupov?

Yusupov was the richest man in Russia. He was flamboyant, believed to be homosexual (though I believe he was actually bisexual) and extremely generous. For example, in exile, he helped

all the emigres who landed in France. Although at times he got pretty bad press, for cross dressing and that sort of thing, he wasn't a bad man at all. His mother, Princess Zinaida Yusupova, had a great deal of influence over him - he got all his fortune from her, not from his father. People have suggested that he wanted to assassinate Rasputin to please his mother, because his mother was opposed to Rasputin's influence on the Tsarina and the idea of a separate peace for Germany. When Yusupov assassinated Rasputin, he was pretty sure that he wouldn't get prosecuted because his wife Irina's royal blood would prevent it happening, which



© Getty Images

Main image source: © Getty Images

RIGHT

Nicholas II with his family. Alexandra is shown at his side, who Rasputin held the most influence over



Rasputin's Killer and his Romanov Princess

by Coryne Hall is out now from Amberley Publishing priced £22.99. The paperback edition will be available in June 2024

THE PAST

1869

THE LIFE OF RASPUTIN

Rasputin was born around 1869 but though sometimes being referred to as 'the mad monk', he actually failed to take such vows. Despite having a young family he abandoned them to wander the world, travelling to the holy land for a number of pilgrimages.

Throughout these years he also became known as something of a magician, with powerful healing abilities. In 1903 he demonstrated these by seemingly curing Alexei, the young son of Tsar Nicholas II of haemophilia.



1914

PREVIOUS ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Two years before his actual murder, in June of 1914, Rasputin was stabbed by a woman called Khioniya Guseva who claimed he was 'seducing the innocent'.

Following the attack, Guseva was deemed mentally unwell and committed to an institution. Rasputin's personality is said to have undergone severe changes following the attack.



1916

THE MAN WHO WOULD NOT DIE

Despite his healing powers, Rasputin had a reputation for deviance and sexual debauchery that became legendary. His perceived supernatural abilities led to one particular myth surrounding his assassination. During the attack he was said to have been fed poisoned cakes and wine, yet continued to live. When his attackers then shot their prey, he was still able to flee into the courtyard. He then either fell or was dumped into the river

where his remains were discovered. Over the years, Rasputin's legend has only grown due to films such as 1966's *Rasputin: The Mad Monk*, which portrayed him as a practically supernatural figure.



ABOVE
Rasputin depicted with a group of his followers and admirers

BELOW
Prince Felix Yusupov, one of the chief conspirators in the assassination

was true. But it was the idea that there were German agents everywhere, and that they wanted to negotiate this separate peace, that ultimately prompted the assassination.

Why did they decide Rasputin had to die?

There was a belief by many, including the British government and various people in Russia, such as the aforementioned Prince Felix Yusupov and the Dowager Empress, that Rasputin was in the pay of the Germans. Indeed, he wanted the Tsar to negotiate a separate peace with Germany. If that had occurred, Germany would no longer be fighting on two fronts and could transfer all their troops to France. For Britain and the other allies the results would be disastrous. Whether Rasputin was spying for the Germans, we don't know. But at the time the theory was that he wanted to negotiate a separate peace with Germany. So it was really because of this fear of Germany and a separate peace that they started wanting Rasputin out of the way.

What happened on the night of his murder?

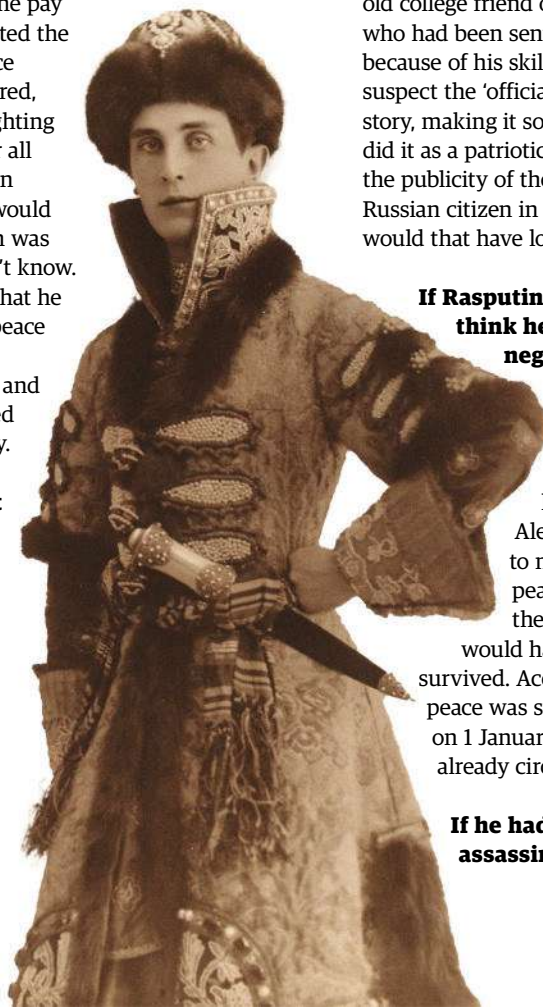
Well, there's two versions. In the official version, Felix took Rasputin to the Moika palace in Petrograd where they plied him with poison cakes and wine. When he didn't die, they shot him but he escaped into the courtyard, where he was again shot in the back and finally killed. But that does not hold water for various reasons. For

one thing, it's known now that Rasputin was killed by three bullets - all of them fired when he was sitting down. There was also no forensic evidence of poison or alcohol. Security experts say that this third shot in the centre of the forehead is a mark of an assassin and various people believe that the British security services were somehow involved in the murder. It may have been that they were there in the planning. The chief suspect is a guy called Oswald Rayner, who was an old college friend of Felix from Oxford who had been sent out to Russia in 1916 because of his skill with languages. I suspect the 'official account' was a cover story, making it sound like the Russians did it as a patriotic deed. After all, imagine the publicity of the British having killed a Russian citizen in their own country. How would that have looked?

If Rasputin had survived, do you think he would have tried to negotiate a peace with Germany?

If that was indeed his plan then certainly. I think he would have tried to persuade Alexandra to get the Tsar to negotiate a separate peace. I think that that was the plan and I think that would have happened had he survived. According to one report, peace was supposed to be declared on 1 January 1917. The rumour was already circulating.

If he had survived the assassination, is it likely



Rasputin would have become another victim of the Revolution?

Certainly, I think the Revolution would still have occurred. People were pretty fed up, they didn't really understand why they were fighting in World War I and they were upset by the vast amount of casualties. There were also severe food shortages due to supply problems, especially in the winter of 1917 when food couldn't be transported over the frozen railways. I think there was always going to be a revolution, though exactly when is another matter. But it's likely that whenever it did occur, Rasputin would have been among the many killed.

Assuming both his survival and escape from the fires of revolution, where might Rasputin have gone?

Due to his position as a sort of pseudo holy man, he probably would have gone into hiding in a monastery - somewhere like Mount Athos in Greece. He'd been to Mount Athos before but there were also plenty of remote monasteries in Russia, places that didn't hear about the Revolution for years. He could have fled to one of these and stayed hidden for the rest of his life. His influence was with Alexandra and when the Revolution occurred the Romanovs were all imprisoned and killed. That would have meant the end of Rasputin too. If he had not been captured or killed he most likely would have been in hiding.

Would Rasputin's survival alone have mattered, or would he require the survival of the Romanovs in order to maintain influence?

Rasputin was there because of Alexei's haemophilia and without that connection to Alexandra and Alexei, what has Rasputin really got to offer? It was all due to the power that he held over Alexandra. He used to say things like "without me, your son will die" or "if I'm killed, you will

lose your son and your crown within six months" and she believed him.

He used to say these prophecies to intentionally frighten Alexandra, but as a result I think his influence really depended on Alexandra being there. It was only her that Rasputin had influence over. The Tsar once actually said, "better one Rasputin than ten fits of hysterics a day". The Empress used to get so hysterical over the problem with Alexei that she would have fits, Rasputin helped to calm her but that was the only influence he had.

If Rasputin had survived, would it have ultimately made much of a difference?

I don't think it would have changed anything, not if the Revolution had still occurred and the Romanovs fell as well. As I said he depended on them and without that link he had nothing. He was only as good as they were in power really. He had no other influence.

What if Rasputin had helped facilitate a separate peace deal with Germany? What could the consequences have been then?

This of course is another matter. It would have changed the course of the war. All the troops that were fighting in Russia would have been pulled over to France and so the Germans would only be fighting on a single front. We could have lost the war, quite frankly, because of all the extra troops pulled out and pulled towards France and Britain. So yes, it would have been quite a disaster. So many people in Russia could see it, lots of high up people. So in this respect, were the idea of him attempting to persuade Alexandra of a separate peace true, then Rasputin's survival could have been very important. But we still don't know if it was. There's lots of clues but so many documents remain unreleased.

BELOW
Rasputin's dead body after being pulled from the river following his assassination



THE POSSIBILITY

1918

THE END OF THE WAR?

If the various theories concerning Rasputin's involvement in a potential peace plan with Germany are true, then it could have meant a very different end to the war. Germany would have been able to move more troops to the Western Front and could have potentially defeated the allies. Without the Treaty of Versailles and the reparations, would this have meant that National Socialism would still have risen in Germany?



1918

EXECUTION OF RUSSIAN IMPERIAL FAMILY

In July of 1918, as the Bolshevik revolution spread, the Romanov royal family were being kept in a small house in Yekaterinburg. When White Russian forces began to approach the area, it became clear that a rescue would be disastrous for the Bolsheviks. On the 17th the family was taken to the cellar of the house when soldiers burst in and brutally gunned them down. When the family's bodies were uncovered in 1991, the bodies of Alexei and one of his sisters were unaccounted for, adding fuel to the myth that Anastasia had survived. Would Rasputin have been in the cellar too?



1932

RASPUTIN AND THE EMPRESS

In 1932, MGM produced the lavish production of *Rasputin And The Empress*. The film starred John, Ethel and Lionel Barrymore and was expected to be a huge success for MGM. However, Yusupov's wife Irina objected strongly to her portrayal as having been under Rasputin's spell, particularly as the pair had never actually met. Irina sued and won £25,000. The case resulted in the practice of placing a disclaimer before the main film. Rasputin's survival may have meant a very different cinematic approach to 'true stories'!





Through History

THE COLOUR REVOLUTION

A new exhibition at the Ashmolean showcases the dazzling colours of Victorian society

When considering the Victorian period in England, it is hard not to think of a dismal time characterised by hard labour, poverty, stuffy societal rules, dreary landscapes covered by smog and a grief-stricken Queen in mourning. However, it was during the 1800s that Britain experienced a colour revolution, with scientific advancements leading to the development and production of a brilliant new array of colours available to dye and

paint with. Artists and designers, as well as everyday Victorians, embraced this new colourful existence resulting in the Victorian era being one of the brightest in history.

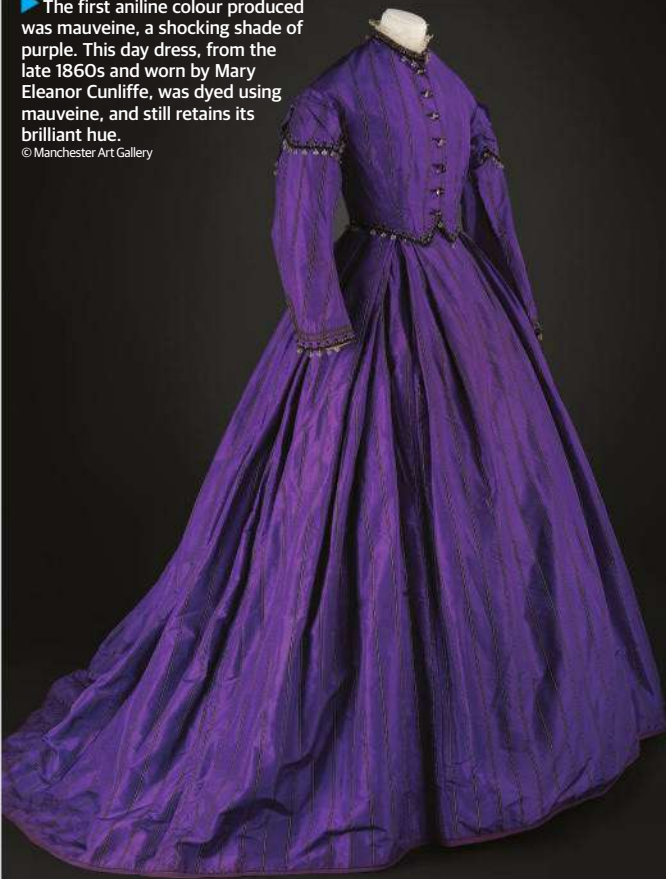
At the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, a new exhibition entitled *The Colour Revolution: Victorian Art, Fashion & Design* brings together 140 artefacts and objects from the period that epitomise and demonstrate the brilliant, colourful artistic landscape of the time that lit up Victorian society. Works by

John Ruskin, JMW Turner, Ramon Casas and Dante Gabriel Rossetti all feature in the collection to highlight the Victorian obsession with colour. Other pieces featuring hummingbirds, peacocks, kingfishers and beetles showcase the colourful inspiration taken by the Victorians from the natural world. In combating the preconceived vision of bleak Victorian England, the Ashmolean's dazzling exhibition highlights the brightness of Victorian culture.

MAUVEINE DAY DRESS

▶ The first aniline colour produced was mauveine, a shocking shade of purple. This day dress, from the late 1860s and worn by Mary Eleanor Cunliffe, was dyed using mauveine, and still retains its brilliant hue.

© Manchester Art Gallery



BEETLE JEWELLERY

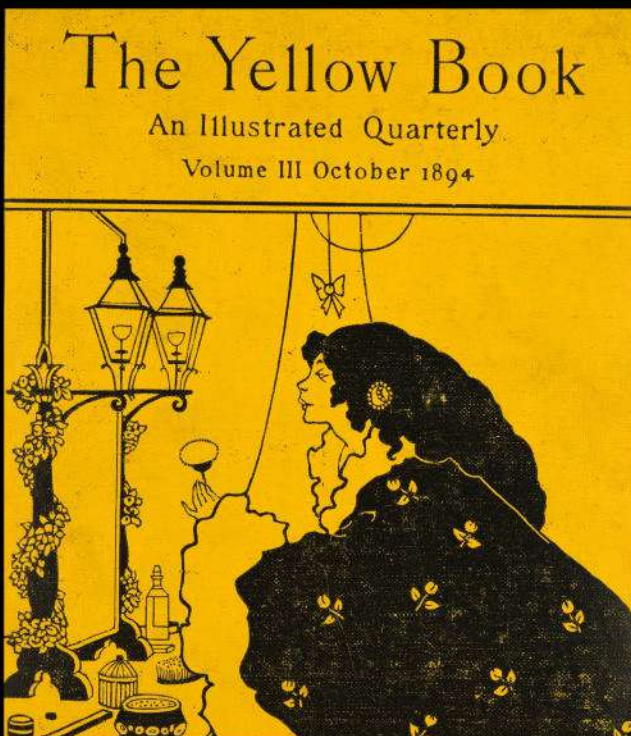
▶ This set of jewellery, made of the bodies of 46 South American weevils, was owned by Lady Granville. Beetles became popular in Victorian designs due to a new interest in the natural world and an attraction to their iridescent colours.

© British Museum, London

THE YELLOW BOOK

▶ The 'Decadent' movement of the late 1800s embraced bright colours, particularly yellow. *The Yellow Book*, a periodic avant-garde journal associated with decadence, began to be published in London in 1894. The iconic yellow cover was designed by Aubrey Beardsley.

© Trinity College, Oxford



STUDY OF A KINGFISHER

▶ Polymath John Ruskin experimented with more colour in the Victorian era. Using colour in some of his studies, including this one of a kingfisher, Ruskin acknowledged that being able to capture colour perfectly was the most precious power of an artist.

© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

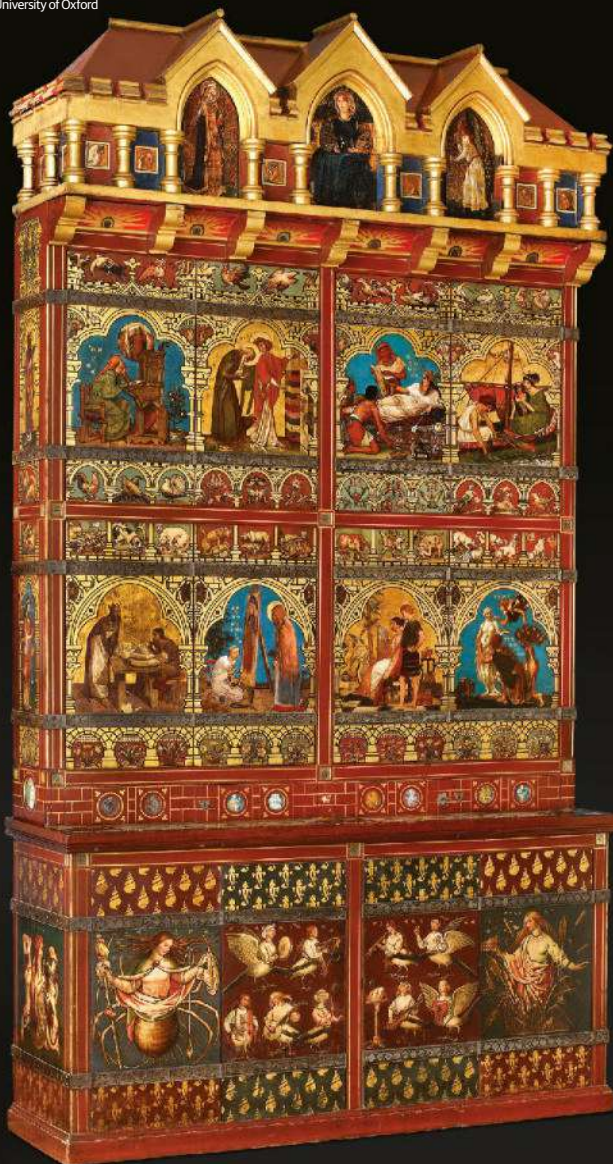




THE GREAT BOOKCASE

▶ Showcased in the International Exhibition of 1862, the Great Bookcase is reminiscent of a Gothic cathedral porch. It was designed by architect William Burges, and its colourful eclectic style was created by 13 different painters including Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford



ANILINE DYES

▶ A huge part of the colour revolution came from an unlikely place. As coal mining boomed in Britain, a by-product of the industry called aniline started to be used in synthetic dyes to make an array of colours.

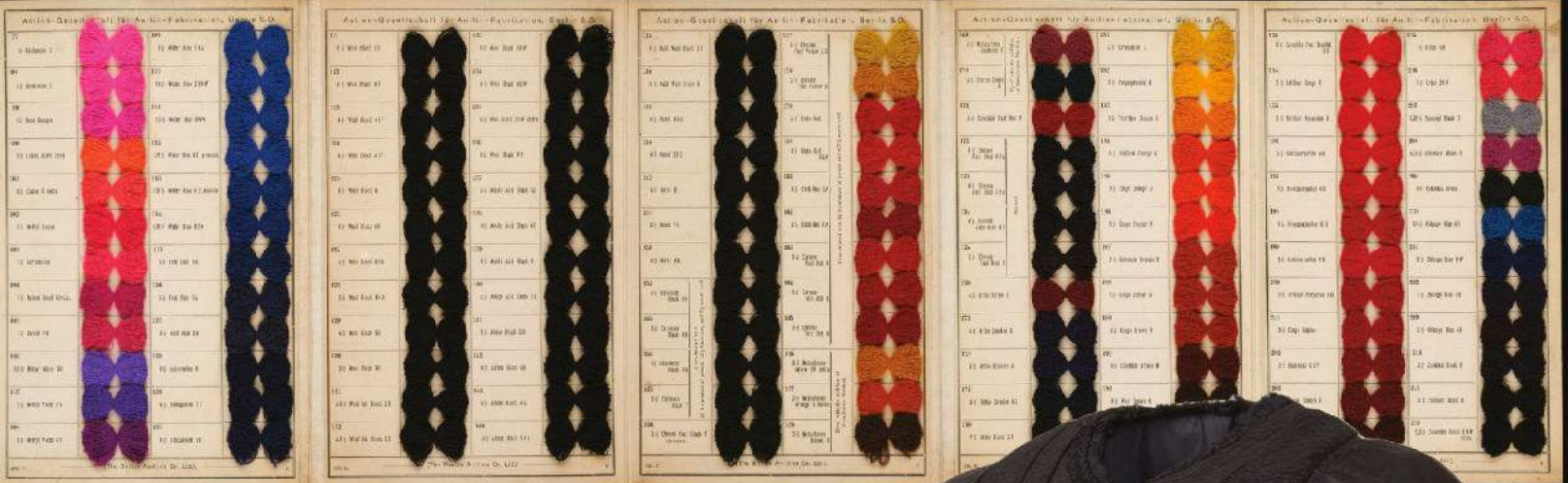
© History of Science Museum, University of Oxford



AFTER THE DANCE

▶ This painting by Ramon Casas utilises the greens and yellows popular with the Decadent movement. The book held by the woman in this scene is likely a popular risqué French novel of the time, which were distinctive for their bright yellow covers.

© Museu de Montserrat, Barcelona



QUEEN VICTORIA'S MOURNING DRESS

Given the perpetual conception of the Victorian era as one characterised by dark and muted colour, it is fitting that Queen Victoria's mourning dress opens this exhibition. Victoria wore black for the last 40 years of her life after her husband's death.
© Historic Royal Palaces, London



The Colour Revolution: Victorian Art, Fashion & Design

is open at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford from now until 18 February 2024.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month



CASSANDRO

Delivers a charming twist on the classic underdog-in-sports story

Cert: 15 **Director:** Roger Ross Williams **Cast:** Gael García Bernal, Roberta Colindrez, Perla De La Rosa **Released:** Out now

Saúl Armendáriz (played by Gael García Bernal) changed the world of Mexico's Lucha Libre (Freestyle Wrestling). An inherently flamboyant take on the globally popular sport, with its colourful masks, heroes and villains, and narratives involving good versus evil, it also comes with hyper-masculine attitudes and casual homophobia. Armendáriz created history in his homeland with *Cassandro*. As a class of traditionally male performer, known as an *exótico* (a wrestler who incorporates elements of drag and femininity, though not necessarily gay), these *exóticos* were never allowed to win against their burly counterparts. Then, *Cassandro* stepped into the ring.

The American-born Armendáriz, raised in El Paso, Texas, with a Mexican mother he adored, was the product of an extra-marital affair. Armendáriz's father wasn't around much and then distanced himself entirely when he found out his son was gay. Abandoned, alone, struggling to make ends meet, one crucial thing the father did provide his son with was a passion for Lucha Libre. The sport consumed his

every waking moment. In real life, Armendáriz left school at 15 to pursue his dream, but the film introduces him as a young man about to turn professional after years of slumming it as an amateur.

Roger Ross Williams' directorial debut is a real-life *Rocky* movie. Gael García Bernal, an actor who can flit easily between indie dramas such as *Cassandro* (2023) and Hollywood blockbuster fare, shines in a heart-warming and supremely charming performance. So captivating is he as Armendáriz, the fact he's twice the age of the luchador was when he started out, it doesn't matter at all. Bernal ensures we're with him every step of the way and emotionally invested in his pursuit of professional excellence.

Like Philadelphia's most famous fictitious son Rocky Balboa, Armendáriz is portrayed as a down-on-his-luck guy with a headful of dreams and talent to succeed. What he needs is a chance, an opportunity to prove his worth. Crossing over the border into Juarez, to perform in amateur bouts for locals as a weedy *exótico* named El Topo (The Mole), he meets and

impresses promoter Lorenzo (Joaquín Cosío), who takes him on as a client.

Characters and incidents from Armendáriz's life and journey to international success as a pioneering - and openly gay - luchador have been condensed, characters amalgamated or fictionalised, but the storytelling and skilful direction do a terrific job ensuring the important moments in and outside the ring have an impact. There's a crucial melancholic sting pervading this film too; seen in the wrestler's economic circumstances, the fact homophobia is everywhere - even people who admire him for his prowess in the ring, call him names - and Armendáriz's drug-fuelled partying is not ignored, either. He's no clean-cut hero; his flaws are apparent and shown to make him a rounded human being, not a saint. What this film has is plenty of heart and hints of darkness without getting melodramatic and syrupy. Williams' stylish but astutely restrained direction ensures his debut feature packs a punch without the need for Hollywood cheese. **MC**



Reviews by

Martyn Conterio, Jonathan Gordon, Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

100 NOVELS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

A round-up of impactful stories that left their mark on the world

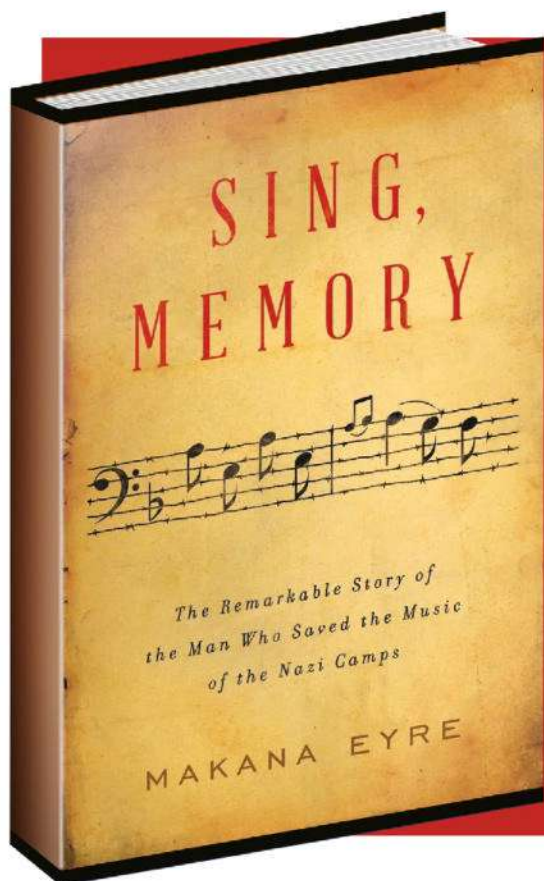
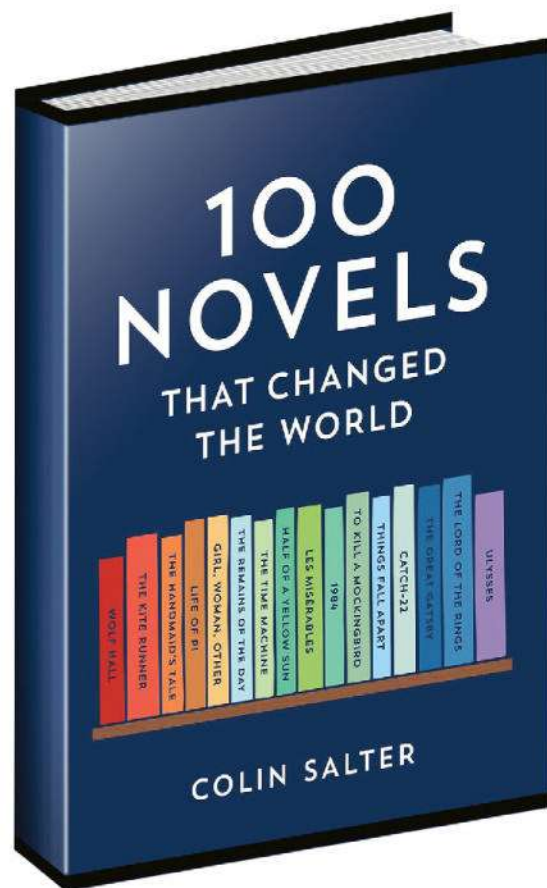
Author: Colin Salter **Publisher:** Pavilion **Price:** £22 **Released:** Out now

As Colin Salter states clearly from the outset of this fine coffee table release, the mission of this book is not to chronicle the best, but the most impactful books in history. Here we have titles that span from the 11th century to the 21st, from America to Japan, but all have in common that their release, whether through the innovation in their prose or the unique voice represented in society, shifted opinion and understanding in the wider world.

At a little over 220 pages, each novel only receives a couple of pages of analysis and explanation, but Salter offers very concise and engaging takes on each. He gets straight to the heart of what makes the particular novel or its author important and how its release affected

the wider world, perhaps even to this day. The book highlights the work of pioneering female writers like Mary Shelley and (more recently) Bernardine Evaristo, as well as socially provocative work like *The Satanic Verses*.

Ultimately this collection is a light read, but a welcome one and a nice offering if you're looking for a guide to some classic books to gain a fuller understanding of the evolution of novel writing. And if you're familiar with the novels already, then these snapshots into the context and history behind them might well give you a deeper appreciation of them and their impact on the world. This is a fine attempt at a lofty concept. **JG**



SING, MEMORY

An amazing account of the Holocaust through the prism of music

Author: Makana Eyre **Publisher:** WW Norton & Company

Price: £27.99 **Released:** Out now

In this remarkable true story of living in and surviving a Nazi camp during World War II, author Makana Eyre recounts the tale of two men who relied on music to get through their ordeal. Imprisoned in Sachsenhausen in 1940, Polish journalist Aleksander Kulisiewicz had been arrested by the Gestapo as a political prisoner. In Sachsenhausen, he first encountered Rosebery d'Arguto, a Jewish choir director, when he came across d'Arguto leading a group of fellow Jewish prisoners in song. Enchanted by his music, Kulisiewicz formed a friendship with d'Arguto that impacted the rest of his life, even after d'Arguto was killed in Auschwitz.

Using the huge archive of music making in the Nazi camps collected and preserved by Kulisiewicz, as well as the archive of d'Arguto,

Eyre recounts how Kulisiewicz ensured that the musical heritage of the camps' prisoners was remembered. D'Arguto had asked him to not let the music of the camps be forgotten and so, blessed with an eidetic memory, Kulisiewicz retained his songs as well as the music and poems of other prisoners in the camp. After surviving the war, Kulisiewicz made it his mission to collect and learn the music of the camps.

Eyre's brilliant retelling of Kulisiewicz's life story draws you into a little known but hugely important aspect of life in the concentration camps, and as a result helps Kulisiewicz in his efforts to preserve the unique compositions borne from such horror. **ES**





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HISTORY WAR RECOMMENDS...



The Forgers

Author Roger Moorhouse Price £25 Publisher The Bodley Head

Moorhouse superbly chronicles the actions of a small group of Polish diplomats and Jewish activists to forge travel documents to smuggle Jews facing extermination in the Holocaust out of the country. To say that this book is brilliantly astonishing would not do the work anywhere near sufficient justice. However, in producing such an achingly moving study, Moorhouse has certainly done justice to the memory of the remarkable people on whom this book shines a long overdue spotlight.

IRON CURTAIN: THE CRUSHING OF EASTERN EUROPE 1944-1956



Applebaum's study of the formation of the USSR is given the Folio Society treatment

Author: Anne Applebaum Publisher: The Folio Society Price: £95 Released: Out now

In the years immediately following the end of World War II, numerous Eastern European countries fell under the control of the Soviet Union. On 5 March 1946, Winston Churchill gave his famous speech in Fulton, Missouri where he stated that "From Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." The speech gave voice to the Cold War that saw Europe divided.

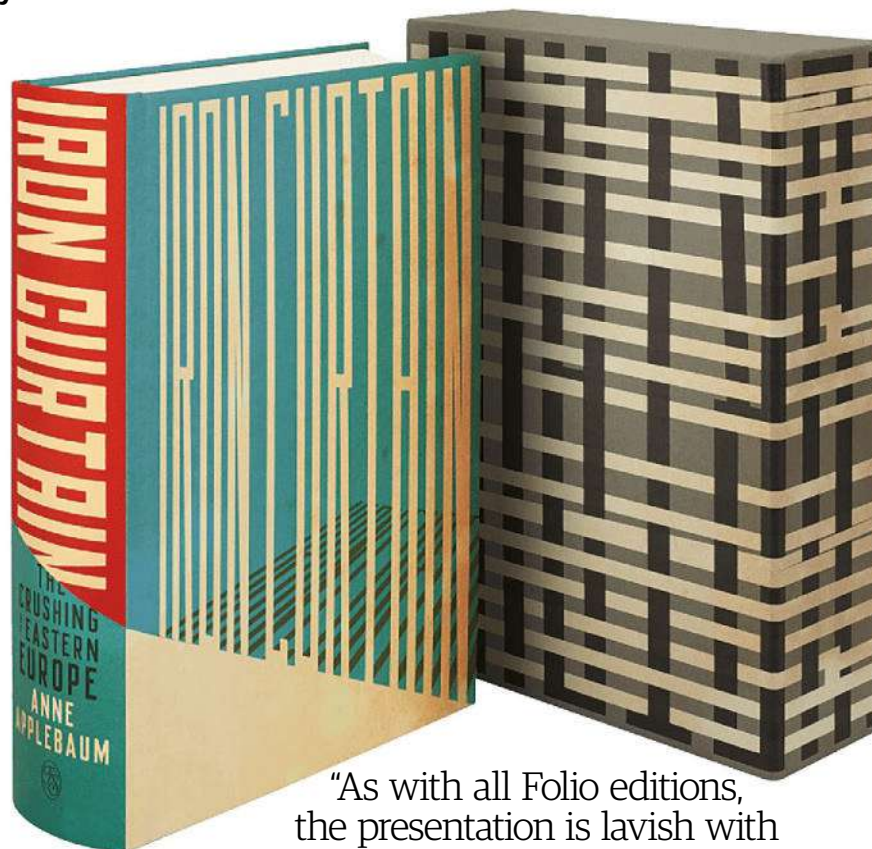
In 2012, journalist and historian Anne Applebaum released her definitive account of how Europe came under Stalin's iron fist. A follow up to her earlier work *Gulag: A History Of The Soviet Camps*, Applebaum's *Iron Curtain* explored the systematic suppression of Eastern Europe in the decade immediately following the end of World War II. Now, The Folio Society has released a lavish reprint of her landmark study.

Until recently, Applebaum identified as having political views somewhat right of centre. Although she has since distanced herself from the right, when *Iron Curtain* was first composed it was from the mind of someone who, as a contemporary Guardian review noted, was "clearly anxious to drive another nail into the coffin of the old European and American left, with their residual tendency to find excuses for Soviet communism." Perhaps it is this which leads to Applebaum's apparent lack of

desire to explore what spurred the Soviet invasions, relying simply on Stalin's tyranny as sufficient explanation.

However, while there is certainly a political edge underpinning Applebaum's work, it does not often dominate the narrative. Instead it bubbles beneath the surface as she seeks to portray the horrors at large in Eastern Europe during this period. This results in what the *New York Times* described as "a concrete and sad record that honours the memory of the millions who were slaughtered, tortured and suppressed in the mad pursuit of totality".

As with all Folio editions, the presentation is lavish with a stupendous design by Jamie Keenan. The beautiful cream and blue cover has a distinctive brown staining effect applied, as if signifying the rot at the heart of Stalin's empire. The grey, black and white folio has a similar effect applied to the spine. Throughout, startling black and white photography (and one sumptuous colour two-page spread in the centre of the book) accompanies Applebaum's text and provides vivid illustration.



"As with all Folio editions, the presentation is lavish with a stupendous design"

The 2023 Folio edition also opens with a sobering new introduction in which Applebaum states: "I assumed it was a book about the past, a description of a terrible, bygone era that would not be repeated. Instead it turned out to be a book that is directly relevant to contemporary events." It's a sombre note to open on, but one that not only helps re-contextualise the book for

an entirely new audience, but also proves its relevance. Applebaum's study remains of value to Cold War historians and those interested in the USSR under Stalin.

The Folio Society's elaborate new edition of Applebaum's *Iron Curtain* would certainly make a splendid addition to the shelves of any home history library. **CM**



HISTORY HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC

Director: Charles Frend **Starring:** John Mills, Derek Bond, Harold Warrender **Country:** United Kingdom **Year:** 1948

Does this account of the valiant Captain's doomed expedition freeze on the facts?

VERDICT: Although dedicated to factual accuracy with a documentary-like tone, the film's uncritical eye, lack of drama and overtly jingoistic tone make it a chore to sit through.

01 The film tells the story of Captain Scott's (John Mills) doomed 1911-1912 expedition to reach the South Pole before Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. The film uses Scott's actual diaries as the basis for much of the script, and in the narration.

02 Much emphasis is placed on Amundsen's use of sled dogs, taking 52 whereas Scott used 23. The dogs allowed Amundsen to move at a faster pace but Scott and his team travelled almost five times slower, forced to manhaul their equipment across the ice.

03 Although accurate, the film rarely questions Scott's decisions, such as taking pony-handler Lawrence Oates on the final stretch, despite the animals having been killed. However, it highlights the problems in him selecting five men instead of the planned four.

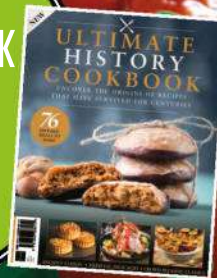
04 Any conflict is avoided. In reality, Oates called the ponies Scott had selected a "lot of crocks" and was angered when he discovered not enough feed had been purchased. Oates once said of Scott that: "He is not straight, it is himself first, the rest nowhere".

05 *Scott Of The Antarctic's* production team approached the British Museum who purportedly loaned them a number of artefacts, including Scott's original logs as well as a variety of other items for use in the film. This adds greatly to the film's authenticity.



Main image: © Alamy
Inset images: © Studiocanal

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Did you know?

According to the legend, Napoleon liked this dish so much that it became his lucky meal.

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken, filleted
- 1 can of chopped tomatoes
- 150ml olive oil
- 1 large onion
- 1 red pepper
- 250ml chicken stock
- 250ml white wine
- 200g mushrooms
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 garlic cloves
- Parsley
- Bay leaf
- Salt and pepper to taste

CHICKEN MARENGO

NAPOLEON'S FAVOURITE DISH, FRANCE/ITALY, 1800 - PRESENT

When Napoleon achieved victory over the Austrian army at the Battle of Marengo in Italy, his chef created this dish in order to celebrate - or so the legend says. While it is doubtful that there is much truth to this tale, this chicken recipe was named for Marengo nonetheless and first appeared in cookbooks around two decades after the battle. Napoleon's chef, Dunan, is said to have used available rustic ingredients and first cooked the dish on the battlefield itself. More modern interpretations of this recipe since have included an addition of a variety of foods, including crayfish, olives and truffles.

METHOD

- 01** Pour the olive oil into a large pan and heat until the oil is hot.
- 02** Place the chicken into the pan and leave to cook until each piece is browned on both sides.
- 03** Once browned, remove the chicken and place it on a plate.
- 04** Dice the onion, red pepper, mushrooms and garlic cloves, add to the pan and cook in the remaining oil for a few minutes.
- 05** Add the chopped tomatoes, chicken stock, white wine and tomato paste to the pan to make a sauce and heat until it is simmering.
- 06** Add the browned chicken to the pan, making sure to submerge it in the sauce.
- 07** Add a little salt and pepper to the pan to taste, along with the bay leaf and some parsley.
- 08** Cover the pan with a lid and reduce the heat to a low temperature.
- 09** Allow the dish to simmer for 15 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through.
- 10** Once cooked, remove the bay leaf from the pan.
- 11** Serve the dish with a sprinkle of fresh parsley over the top.

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